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Freud and Archeology ★

by

Suzanne Cassirer Bernfeld

ROUSSEAU called the pre-history of civilization "the childhood of man"; an expression that was generally used in the nineteenth century, especially by German romantic poets and philosophers. Freud, his attention focused on the childhood of his patients, put forward a variation of Rousseau's idea. He calls early childhood the pre-history of the human being. It too has its relics. Covered by the oedipal repressions, the undamaged memories of early childhood lie buried under strata of amnesia, and are hidden in the unconscious. Just as an archeologist may excavate the fragments of former civilizations, the psychoanalyst by a painstaking process is able to recover the memories of an earlier day. This comparison, which is very often used in Freudian writings, is a remnant of the primitive ideas he had formed about his own childhood. Throughout his life he was interested in archeology and ancient history, and his archeological studies and collections were to him an "unsurpassed comfort" in the efforts of mastering problems and conflicts.¹ If this is remarkable, it is even more astounding that these interests remained undiminished through all the different stages of his own development as well as that of psychoanalysis.

Freud often refers to his own childhood. But since he uses his early memories as illustrations and elucidations of his ideas, these references are scattered through the seventeen volumes of his works. In 1944 this material was collected and integrated in a paper on 'Freud's Early Childhood'.² Since then, Freud's letters to Dr. Wilhelm Fliess

*Read at the meeting February 11, 1951 of the San Francisco Psychoanalytic Society.

have appeared.³ These may contain little that is new about his childhood; however the additional biographical facts that are given, and the emotional tenor of the letters — very striking when contrasted to the great restraint Freud exercised in his published writings — lend this correspondence an unusual significance, and put the study of his childhood on an even more solid basis.

Making use of this material, I shall attempt to trace the development of Freud's archeological interest to its beginning, to diagnose it as an early sublimation, and to reconstruct tentatively its origin and dynamics. I shall try, in other words, to outline a psychoanalytic study of one of Freud's earliest achievements.

One of the first and very typical examples of Freud's archeological similes occurs in the case history of Dora⁴. He writes: "In the face of the incompleteness of my analytic results I had no choice but to follow those discoverers whose good fortune it is to bring to the light of day after their long burial, the priceless though mutilated relics of antiquity. I have restored what is missing taking the best models known to me from other analyses, but like a conscientious archeologist I have not omitted to mention in each case where the authentic parts end and my construction begins". This programmatic note introduces the fragmentary case of Dora, which was closed December 31, 1899 after three months of treatment. We should have a good deal of difficulty finding "the best models known" at that time unless we understand that he is referring to his self analysis. Another paragraph in Dora is even more suggestive: "When Dora stayed with the K's, she used to share a bedroom with Frau K. and the husband was quartered elsewhere. She had been the wife's confidant and adviser in all the difficulties of her married life. Medea had been quite content that Creüsa should make friends with her two children." Without interrupting the narration, not even by a slight "as for example", Freud simply substitutes the names Medea and Creüsa for Mrs. K. and Dora, as if it were self-under-

stood that mythological heroines belong in case histories of neuroses.

This unusual kinship between mythological figures and neurotic patients has an important precedent. In the letter to Fliess — October 15, 1897 — he writes: "I have found infatuation with the mother and jealousy of the father in my own case, and I believe that they are general experiences of early childhood. That explains the striking power of King Oedipus in the Greek tragedy"³. Here we have the true model of Dora's entanglement with Mrs. K. and Medea. The original combination was Amalia Freud and Jacob Freud with Oedipus Sigmund Freud.

Freud's growing interest in archeology and mythology was not only reflected in his prose style, which was being invaded by terms and similes from these fields, but also in his ever increasing collection of antiques. His collection is first mentioned in the letter to Fliess of December 6, 1896: "I have decorated my study with plaster copies of Florentine statues. It is a source of exceptional recreation and comfort to me". Two and a half years later in the letter of July 17 1899, he informs Fliess of some recent acquisitions: "Old Gods must still exist because I got a few not long ago. Amongst them a stone Janus whose two faces regard me with great superiority"³.

In "The Interpretation of Dreams" and "The Psychopathology of Everyday Life" one gets further glimpses of the growth of his collection. First he had chosen some bronze statuettes and terra cotta figurines from Rome and Greece, with an occasional Egyptian piece — small things he bought on travels to remind him of the Mediterranean countries, which also functioned as good luck token, promising him that after the long winter in Vienna he could return to what became more and more the symbol of home. The little statues found a place on his desk, until his treatment room and the adjoining library were filled with a large collection. Glass cases held innumerable vases, bowls and statuettes from Pompeian and Etruscan tombs, and irri-

descent glasses, ocellares and earthen lamps from Rome. The permanently open doors to the library were flanked by Egyptian stone reliefs that stood on the floor. On the small table that was before his eyes when he sat in the large chair behind the couch stood an especially beautiful bronze head of Buddha, and the Chinese jade bowl that he had bought in America, at Tiffany's, in 1909. On one wall hung the portrait of an Egyptian female mummy — "with a nice Jewish face" as Freud occasionally commented. Over the couch hung an etching of the great temple of Karnak, and next to it a plaster copy of the marble grave relief of Gradiva, on the ledge of which he kept for many years a bundle of dry papyrus leaves. His little housemaid Paula used to warn newcomers to the couch to keep away from them, since at the slightest touch they would dissolve in a rain of dust.

Freud saw his patients and did most of his reading and all of his writing in these two rooms. They were closed off from the waiting room by upholstered double doors. Another door opened to a small and dark passage-way somewhat like a subterranean corridor, which led to the family living quarters. The antique possessions were confined to these rooms, which finally took on the look of a museum.

It is easy to imagine how puzzled many of his early visitors were when they found the "expert in sex" in this strange setting. Today, archeological relics seem quite appropriate as symbols of psychoanalytic procedure and its results. (What, in fact, should one do with repressed memories brought back to life and with the pictures and relics of one's past? They are kept as museum pieces — carefully put out of the way from everyday business, but near enough for contemplation and further study.)

Freud often used his collection to elucidate certain interpretations in his analyses. In the case of the rat-man he relates: "I then made some short observations upon the fact that everything conscious was subject to a process of wearing away while what was unconscious was relatively

unchangeable; and I illustrated my remark by pointing to the antiques standing about my room. They were in fact, I said, objects found in a tomb and their burial had been their preservation; the destruction of Pompeii was only beginning now that it had been dug up''⁵.

Sometimes when a patient asked of what possible use these detailed memories were to him, he was answered calmly: "Only a good-for-nothing is not interested in his past". Freud did not mind showing his personal pleasure in the psychoanalytic treasure hunt on which he had gone with his patient, and his great satisfaction when it resulted in a discovery. At such times he would get up and say: "This we must celebrate", select with care and pleasure a "good cigar" and light it ceremoniously⁶. On the other hand he was openly disappointed when the patient became overactive and anxious and handed him but a segment of a memory. Then Freud would declare with the finality of a museum director: "Yes, this fragment might possibly belong to the period about which we are curious but it is not precise enough and not complete. We have to go on digging and wait until we find something more representative".

In his collections he valued above all those pieces that were undented and in perfect condition, which had withstood the wear of time and had been resurrected from their grave fresh as ever; in original splendor.

In repressed memories it is this same quality that he never tired of praising, and which had so fascinated him when he met it for the first time during hypnotic experiments.

Even in his pre-psychoanalytic years he was intrigued by archeological adventures. He participated in the excavations of the day by following in the newspapers and journals their progress in Pompeii, Rome and Troy. He was especially enthusiastic over Heinrich Schliemann's discoveries in Troy. When Schliemann published his findings in 1880, he prefaced them with an autobiographical note, in which he relates falling in love with Homer's Iliad when

he was ten years old, and his subsequent conviction, against all contemporary scientific evidence, that the location of the great wars in Troy were historical and that Homer's description of the palace of Priamus should be followed in the actual excavations.

In the letter to Fliess — May 28, 1899 — Freud says: "I have given myself Schliemann's Troy as a present and was delighted with the history of his childhood. That man was happy when he found the treasure of Priamus. There is no other happiness than the one which one finds in the fulfillment of a childhood wish".³ And, on December 21, 1899, after he had begun to reconstruct his childhood, he wrote: "I hardly dare to believe it yet. It is as if Schliemann had again dug up Troy which before him was considered to be a myth"³.

Freud's interest was not limited to excavations. Everything historical appealed to him, but the history and geography of the Mediterranean basin were his favorites. About them he spoke with real emotion. In 1934 he wrote in a letter: "None of us has ever lost his longing for the Mediterranean"⁷. He was familiar enough with Latin and Greek to read the poets and historians in the original, and expressed some pity for those who had to be satisfied with translations. Amongst the art historians of his time the Swiss, Jacob Burckhardt, had the greatest influence on his views.

The known history of this interest goes back to Freud's tenth year, when he entered the Gymnasium. The curriculum of this equivalent of our high school centered around the culture of the antique world. Classes were held in Mathematics, physics and other practical topics, but the main emphasis was placed on Latin, Greek and ancient history. For most pupils this was pure coercion and the subjects always remained alien to them. Freud belonged to the very small minority to which this humanistic education became a very personal matter.^{3*} When he was fifty-eight he reiterated what the gymnasium had given him: "The first

vistas into an ancient culture that had vanished. At least for me they later became a never excelled comfort in the struggle of life"¹.

What prehistoric conflict lay at the root of an interest so completely foreign to his professional scientific studies?

Freud's earliest childhood scenes not only fell victim to the usual repressions, but the stage on which they had been played vanished, as did many of the most important actors. When he was three years old his family moved away from their hometown, Freiberg in Moravia, and after a year's stay in Leipzig settled in Vienna. This simple geographic change was a catastrophe for Freud and he spent the next forty years of his life trying to undo it. Freiberg became Pompeii and he became its Schliemann.

He was never reconciled to Vienna. "I hate Vienna; almost like a person," he once wrote to Fliess. "I am the giant Anteauss in reverse, as soon as I leave my Vaterstadt I grow in strength"². When he was seventy-five, a group of citizens wanted to put up a memorial tablet on the house in Freiberg where he was born and had lived the first three years of his life. Freud thanked the burgermeister in a charming letter and sent Anna Freud to accept the honor for him. But when, at about the same time, the city of Vienna planned to honor him by renaming the street where he had lived for almost fifty years, Sigmund Freudgasse, he termed the project, without any polite pretensions, as "non-sensical and not proper"³.

To understand the loss that created such long-lasting mourning, and the reactions that led him into his lifework, I shall attempt a comparison of the prehistoric childhood in Freiberg and the historic period in Vienna.

Freiberg was a small country town surrounded by meadows and forests. The family group in which Freud was raised was of somewhat unusual structure. The father, Jacob, had two grown sons, Emanuel and Philipp, from his first marriage. When Freud was born as the eldest child of his father's second marriage to Amalia Nathansohn, Em-

anuel was already married and had two children, John and Pauline. Thus three generations lived under one roof: Jacob Freud in his forties, twenty years older than his second wife and his two sons Philipp and Emmanuel; his grandchildren, John and Pauline, and his third son Sigmund, the last three about the same age. Actually they were nephew, niece and uncle but for all practical purposes they were brothers and sisters. They were inseparable. They loved each other and fought each other, and his friendship with John served Freud as a model for many later relationships.

Freud felt at ease with everyone in his family except with the father-grandfather. Him he admired from a distance as the wisest, oldest and most powerful of men, the ultimate judge, the top of the family hierarchy above Emmanuel, Philipp, mother and John. There was also an old nurse, a very important figure. She belonged to a different civilization. While his parents spoke German, were liberals and non-religious Jews, the old woman spoke Czech, was a superstitious peasant and a Catholic. These people made up his world until the move to Vienna destroyed it: The half-brothers with John and Pauline went to Manchester in England; the nurse was left behind.

His parents seemed visibly poorer to Freud; no servant now helped his mother. Business worries were permanent, and the once harmonious and easy household became harassed and irritable. When Freud spoke of those early years in Vienna he said: "From my youth I know that wild horses of the pampas once caught with a lasso, retain throughout their lives some anxious expectation. Thus I learned helpless poverty when I was young — and I am constantly afraid of it".¹⁰ This description does not fit the economic realities. The children were sent to private schools; and during vacations the family occasionally travelled.¹¹ But his words clearly reflect his nostalgia for the spaciousness of Freiberg and his distaste for the Viennese cage in which he was locked with too many sisters. Once

more arrived each succeeding year, and he could not escape the feeling that there was less and less for him to eat. The persistent strength of this fear is evident in a letter that he wrote to Hanns Sachs in 1938: "Your plan for a new English language Imago in America did not please me at first. It didn't seem practical to me to create another sister-Imago which would cut off the water or, to express it more aptly, drink away the milk of ours"¹².

With the prehistoric period he lost a world of love objects and received in exchange an increasingly trivial family. In Freiberg there had been many people who could help him with his aggressions and hostilities. In Vienna he faced the inescapable Oedipus-situation alone. The family pressure became heavier, and the demands of morality suddenly appeared rigid. The less economic security his father possessed the greater were his demands for unquestioning respect and the strictest obedience. This added insult to injury.

Actually Freiberg had not been an undisturbed golden age, as idealization would insist. It was in fact, full of conflicts. But these conflicts lacked the intensity of the Oedipal complex. And among the large and varied multitude of love objects, ambivalent hostilities were more easily distributed.

In Freud's self-analysis the earliest important figure from Freiberg was his old nurse; he called her the prehistoric old woman when she first reappeared in a dream. She was ugly and old, but very clever. She taught him to have a high opinion of himself and she treated him as if he were her own child. The letters to Fliess bring additional and, for the purposes of this study, decisive information. In the letters of the third and fifteenth of October, 1897³ he reports that she told him much of God and hell, and that she had carried him into all the five churches of Freiberg¹³. When he came home afterwards he preached to the family and demonstrated how God had acted. This report permits a new reconstruction of her part in Freud's development.

The old woman helped him when he suffered one of his earliest traumas. He was not quite one year old when his first brother was born. Later he remembered how jealous he was of the intruder and how much he hated him but he is never mentioned in his writings. In conversations however, Freud alluded to his appearance, and the reactions that followed, as an example of the impact of early jealousy. In the letters to Fliess this brother is named: he was called Julius. Here, together with him appears the prehistoric old woman. That these two are united in the same layer of his unconscious has its good reasons. Both vanished in Freiberg; the brother first. According to family legend, he died when his first teeth came through, but it does not matter how exact the legend is. We do know that Freud was a voracious child and that he felt impoverished by a second claimant to his mother's milk and love. When after eight months of life the baby died, it was easy for Freud to believe that he had disappeared because of the magic power of his death wishes. "From his death on I have kept an inclination to self-reproaches" Freud writes to Fliess¹⁴. At the time of Julius' death Freud was nineteen months old.

If it was terrible to realize that his mother did not love him alone, the guilt he felt about his rival's death was far more painful. It seemed to him as if he had wilfully caused his death and burial. But the nurse with her old wives' tales was ready to console him: the dead are not really dead. They go to heaven and become powerful intercedents at the throne of God. And on Easter Sunday, the most important of Catholic holidays, the resurrection of the dead is celebrated. Julius and Jesus are neither killed nor angry. They are buried for the time being. When the old woman visits the cemetery they are happy — in heaven — to accept her flowers and prayers¹⁵.

This conviction lasted with undiminished strength until the old woman too disappeared. She was caught stealing and was arrested by a policeman whom Philipp called.

The adults found no occasion to explain what had hap-

pened. All that he heard was a witty and evasive remark by his half-brother, who said that the old woman was boxed in. What did that mean? Was she in the coffin with Julius? Dead or alive? Something told him that she had been taken away against her will, and his trust in the omnipotence of her magic beliefs was shaken. This was the natural reaction of a child, which takes symbols literally and is bound to test their strength against the realities of life, while the adult has the capacity to accept their abstract nature. To make matters worse, just when she disappeared a new child, his oldest sister was born — a bad exchange indeed. With the nurse's help he had been able to manage his self-reproaches over Julius' death. Now a repetition of the trauma hit him far harder. He was only eleven months old when Julius was born; he was two and a half years old when the nurse disappeared and Anna was born. Her birth revived his old anger against his mother. Once when he couldn't find her he became desperate, because he was afraid that her absence meant he had killed her, as he had once killed Julius. He asked Philipp to open a cupboard, believing, as he later wrote, that she was inside.¹⁶

Freud mentioned this episode several times, and interpreted it in various ways. The cupboard is over-determined as box, coffin, and symbol of pregnancy. Is it not also possible that it stands for the altar of the Catholic church?

Until he was nine and a half years old he witnessed seven arrivals of brothers and sisters — and only one — Julius, died; the others stayed for life. And he was supposed to act like a grown-up brother. "Those were hard years not worth to remember"¹⁷.

The most critical event at this stage of his development was however an episode on the trip to Vienna. He saw his mother in the nude. Even in a correspondence between two physicians this apparently had to be related in latin. "Matrem in Nudam" Freud described the situation to Fliess years later¹⁸. He felt his libido turning to her and that was

so shocking an experience that he immediately recognized it as a mortal sin. When he saw open gas flames in a passing railroad station he suffered an attack of panic and believed they were lost souls burning in hell. Freud, by the way, often refers in the letters to Fliess to his phobia of trains and travelling. Analysts today would not diagnose it as a phobia, but as a remnant of the panic he experienced on this trip, which continued to make him uncomfortable on trains until he had worked through his self-analysis. These feelings, however, never prevented him from travelling.

In Vienna Freud consciously became a Jewish child, although not a religious one. Jewish children are at a disadvantage when it comes to what are generally called the consolations of religion. They must bear their guilt feelings unaided by confessors, and what they once lose remains lost forever. Death to them is nothing but the end of life — there is no glorification of miseries, no compensation for injustices, and of course no resurrection.

Freud could not adjust to this undecorated realism without protest. When he was six years old and heard the statement "of dust thou are made; to dust thou wilt return" he could not believe it. "Whereupon my mother rubbed the palms of her hands together just as if she were making dumplings, except there was no dough between them — and showed me the blackish scales of epidermis that were thus rubbed off, as a proof that it is of dust we are made. Great was my astonishment at this demonstration *ad oculos* and I slowly acquiesced to the idea I was later to hear expressed in the words 'Thou owest nature a death' ".¹⁹ This is, by the way, one of the rare examples of misquotation by Freud; significantly he substitutes Nature for Shakespeare's "Thou owest God a death" (King Henry IV, Part I, Act 5 Sn 1, v 12).

It is apparent that Freud within himself had to integrate two opposing forces. One was the poetic Catholic experience of Freiberg; the other his life in a realistic Jewish family

in Vienna. In the years from four to ten he achieved what he was later to describe as the hardest task of the mind: the renunciation of magic thinking and illusions. This renunciation left a void that he filled with legends of Greece and Rome. The golden age of civilization like the golden years of Freiberg had vanished; it could be reconstructed, however, by the findings and interpretations of history. He was very early aware of the recurrence of antique values. Even before he went to the Gymnasium he encountered large numbers of classic gods and heroes in his readings in German literature; while his first book, he says, was a history of the French revolution in which he must have read of the rebirth of Roman virtues and the proclamation of a Goddess of Reason.

The psychological value of archeology to Freud lies in its power of dealing with guilt feelings over death-wishes. It offers the notion of a status that is neither death nor life. Therefore thinking of love objects as dead and buried is no more an irrevocable condemnation. Although objects of ambivalent love are banished for a time from one's crowded world, they can always be called back. The buried family members await a kind of resurrection by future archeologists.

But this mechanism functions only after loved and hated persons have been symbolically represented in the unconscious by statues, vases, buildings and towns. In "Civilization and Its Discontents" we find a convincing example of this form of substitution. Freud says: "Let us make the fantastic supposition that Rome were not a human dwelling-place but a mental entity with just as long and varied a past history; that is in which nothing once constructed had perished and all the earliest stages of development had survived alongside the latest. This would mean that in Rome the palaces of the Caesars were still standing on the Palatine. Where the Palazzo Caffarelli stands there would also be, without its being removed, the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, not merely in its latest

form, moreover, as the Romans saw it but also in its earliest shape, when it still wore an Etruscan design and was adorned with terra cotta antefixae. On the Piazza of the Pantheon we should find not only the Pantheon of today as bequeathed to us by Hadrian but on the same site also Agrippa's original edifice. And the observer would need merely to shift the focus of his eyes perhaps or change his position, in order to call up a view of either the one or the other". There Freud abandons the simile because it leads to the inconceivable or even to absurdities and explains its sole justification: "It shows us how far away from mastering the idiosyncrasies of mental life we are by treating them in terms of visual representation"²⁰. When he wrote this long digression he was, it seems to me, thinking of Freiberg, where generations, which should succeed each other, existed side by side under the same roof: the ancient nurse, the father-grandfather, the young mother, the brother-fathers, and the children. Freud's great interest in the layer structure of ancient cities, as well as that of the mental apparatus, probably goes back to early childhood efforts to comprehend his family structure and to master its emotional demands. Dating each person and assigning each to his proper place was a significant achievement, the pleasure of which recurred in the intellectual satisfaction of dating layers, and of recognizing in the tiniest pottery fragment the time and place to which it belongs.

In Freud's description of his development he places a major accent on the youth and beauty of his mother while he was a child, implying that she was not yet aged by many unnecessary births. That he tried to collect only unbroken specimens might well be due to his later symbolic re-discovery of his mother in the ruins of Rome.

That the vases, lamps, statuettes which he collected and so carefully preserved were unconsciously connected with his daughters, sisters and friends, is explicitly stated in "Psychopathology of Everyday Life"²¹. He mentions three pieces of his collection that he broke by a parapraxis as

sacrificial offerings. The first was a small marble Venus. Of this he writes: "One morning when I walked through a room with straw slippers on my feet and on a sudden impulse flung one of my slippers off my foot against the wall, it fell in such a way that a pretty little Venus of marble fell down from her console. While it broke in pieces I quoted the verses by Bush: 'Oh! the Venus is perdu — Klickeradoms! — of Medici!' ". This sacrifice was for the recovery of his daughter Mathilde. Another time the cover of his marble inkwell was "executed" as he puts it, in anticipation of a gift from his sister. The third piece was a beautiful, glazed Egyptian figurine that he had just bought. He broke it in two to ward off the greater evil of losing an old and trusted friend, who felt he had been wronged. "Fortunately both friendship and figurine could be glued together so that no crack was noticeable".²¹

Considering the large number of breakable objects in his collection and his constant handling of them for over forty years it is remarkable that only these three mishaps occurred. He was proud of his dexterity, but his pride might very well refer to an achievement of greater significance.

Goethe reports in his autobiography that once as a boy he amused himself by throwing a considerable number of miniature dishes out of a window, and how much he enjoyed their breaking to pieces on the street. Freud analyzed this episode as a typical and healthy reaction of the child to the birth of a younger brother.²² In his youth Freud was tempted to such violence many times. Perhaps his carefully kept collection of glass and pottery demonstrates his mastery over such urges, and is significant for the protective and generous attitude to his whole family that he kept all through his life.

If my reconstruction of the role of the prehistoric old woman is correct, then Freud's interest in archeological facts and objects continues his early belief in resurrection of the dead, displaced on a different level. He can gratify

the death-wishes and the preservation-wishes of his ambivalent love in aim-inhibited ways with the mechanism of symbolic substitution. Since the archaic belief and its libidinal foundation was never repressed, but only gradually condemned by the growing strength of reason, we deal here with a sublimation in the narrowest sense of the word or an early ego-achievement in the mastery of instincts.

In this reconstruction only one factor is hypothetical — the assumption that as a child he knew the meaning of Easter. Is it not reasonable to believe that a devout Catholic woman, who treated him as her own son, carried him to mass and talked to him about God and hell, also spoke with emotion of the greatest day in the church year?

This is supported by two clues. First, an odd and somewhat paradoxical preference which Freud had for Easter.

In the correspondence with Fliess Easter is mentioned so often, that it seemed worthwhile to make a list of it. From the beginning of 1896, when the friendship became more intimate to the beginning of 1901, when it started to break off, the word Easter occurs twenty-two times. At the height of their friendship Freud felt that a meeting with Fliess on the classical soil of Rome at Easter time would be the greatest happiness to achieve.—“Easter Sunday signifies to me the 50th anniversary of the beginning of my medical practice,” he wrote in a letter, dated “Easter, April 2, 1936”²³. An unusual date for a doctor in Vienna where Easter holidays are high festivals, all stores and offices are closed and only emergency services are performed.

The other indication is Freud's statement to Fliess on his second dream about the old woman. “She washed me in reddish water in which she had washed herself before (interpretation not difficult). I find nothing similar to this in the chain of my conscious memories and therefore claim this item as a genuine discovery”²⁴. After that this discovery is not mentioned again nor does he give the interpretation that he had in mind. But the context points to blood. The priest at Easter Mass washes his hands in red

wine diluted with water which stands for Christ's blood. Freud continues the quoted sentence with the following remark: "A severe critic may object that these are later phantasies projected into the past. The crucial experiment decides against him. And reddish water is one." For crucial experiment Freud uses here the Latin words *experimentum crucis*. This association seems to indicate that he was preconsciously occupied with church matters.

It has been said that Freud introduced the sex-instinct when he was young and the death-instinct when he became old. The material presented shows, I think, that Freud from his earliest years on was very much concerned with the problem of death, probably even earlier than with sex. A paragraph in the postscript to his "Autobiographical Study", 1935²⁵, can now be understood more precisely than before: "I myself, find that a significant change has come about. Threads which in the course of my development had become interentangled have now begun to separate: interests which I had acquired in the later part of my life have receded, while the older and original ones become prominent once more. It would be true to say that since 1923 I have made no further decisive contributions to psychoanalysis. . . This . . . is connected with an alteration in myself, with what might be described as a phase of regressive development. My interest, after making a lifelong detour through the natural sciences, medicine and psychotherapy, returned to the cultural problems, which had fascinated me long before, when I was a youth scarcely old enough for thinking." Here he refers to his studies in religion, which started in 1912, but which only from 1923 on became a main topic of his publications. In these works he tries to understand the appeal of religion and the nature of its tempting power. These were some of the puzzles he faced as a boy, "between six and ten," scarcely old enough for thinking", when he fell in love with archeology and therefore gained the strength to live in mental security without religion. The regression of which Freud speaks

in the postscript started earlier than 1923. Already in 1919 he had written "Beyond the Pleasure Principle". It contains his first elaborated discussion of the death problem; just as in his childhood death and religion were tied together, but the death-wishes preceded by a little the resurrection idea.

Fritz Wittels, Freud's "unwanted" biographer, was amazed at the sudden change in Freud's interests and tried to explain it by saying that the death-instinct theory was Freud's reaction to the death of his daughter Sophie in 1919.²⁶ Freud was very impressed by this interpretation. In a letter he commended Wittels for this ingenious reconstruction. He clearly intimated that he agreed in substance with Wittels, but he added, his daughter Sophie had died only after the manuscript "Beyond the Pleasure Principle" had been completed.²⁷ If only this part of Wittel's interpretation is erroneous, one may ask whose death is actually responsible for the return of Freud's thinking to his earliest intellectual problem?

His nephew Herman Graf, of whom he was very fond, was killed in action during the first World War; but apparently his death had no influence on Freud's thoughts, and no other relative or close friend died in those four years. Freud reports that during the war years he once dreamt of the danger to which two of his sons were exposed in combat. He gives a few fragments of his analysis of this dream — enough to understand that he caught himself wishing that he, the older man, might live safely, even if his sons were to perish²⁸.

Analyzing his death wish at sixty he connects his unconscious feelings towards his sons with an early childhood scene, which occurred shortly after the death of Julius. In this episode he climbed a stool to get — without permission — something good to eat from the cupboard. He lost his balance and fell. He injured his jaw so badly that it had to be stitched. A scar persisted, he said, "as if to remind me that it served me right"²⁹. His sons survived the war,

but it is possible that this mental casualty impressed him sufficiently to reflect again on his earlier ideas of life and death. The result of this re-evaluation of his early problems is found in his "return to his cultural interests".

Archeology represented for Freud not only the mastery of the death problem. Already in Freiberg he had identified the grave with his mother's womb, had united the dead and the not yet living. The sublimation of his infantile sexual curiosity therefore could join with his archeological interests. In the history of the antique world he found an inexhaustible source for satiating his thirst for knowledge. This subject can only be treated by including an analysis of other features of Freud's personality. Here I intend to confine myself exclusively to his archeological and historical interests, yet it seems necessary in order to show the intensity and the ramifications of these interests, to enumerate a few connected topics. There is Freud's concern with Jensen's novel "Gradiva", and his identification with the young archeologist Norbert Hanold. Further, his preoccupation with two great figures of history that bear the name Julius: Julius Caesar, who was assassinated by a brother-son figure; and Pope Julius II, for whose tomb Michelangelo made the Moses. Freud's liking for conquerors should also be mentioned: Moses, Alexander, Hannibal, Caesar, Napoleon and his Marshals, as well as the German Emperor Sigismund, who conquered Bohemia and was a protector of the Jews. Until his 13th year, by the way, Freud was listed as "Sigismund" in the Gymnasium records.

There are two further topics that I wish to discuss briefly.

Like an agoraphobic patient, who needs a companion to resist the temptations of the street, a child creates in his phantasy a protector more admirable and more powerful than the not so heroic father. The subsequent phantasies are called the family romance. In his earlier childhood Freud's family romance centered around the wish and conviction of being the son of his clever and tricky brother

Philipp, who had taken away the old woman, and according to the prelogical thinking of the two and a half year old child, it must have been *he* who slipped the newborn sister, Anna, into the mother.

Six years later when the four additional sisters had appeared and Philipp was far away, Freud took up this early phantasy to express his discontent with his father, and then transferred it to the stage of ancient history, where from then on, the battles of the family romance were fought.

When Freud was ten years old and his youngest brother was born, his father asked him to suggest a name for the new-born baby. Without hesitation Freud recited the great deeds of the son of Philipp of Macedon, and then suggested the name Alexander, which his father accepted.³⁰ Alexander the Great died young; so did Julius Freud. Certainly no one detected the triumphant irony towards his unsuspecting father that was implied in this choice of name.

Alexander was given his share of competitive feelings although Freud, luckier with him than he had been with his brother Julius, was always sure that his mother discriminated in his favor between them.

Freud by the way remained fond of magic names. His second son received an English name — which placed him together with John in the company of happier relatives, who had gone to England instead of Vienna. And the English name chosen was the one of the king-murderer Oliver Cromwell. The other two sons are named for the two men who were ideal father-figures for Freud — Martin for Jacques Martin Charcot and Ernst for Ernst Wilhelm Bruecke.

Freud's preoccupation with the admirable worlds of Rome and Hellas, and his achievement of learning and appreciating the classics, contained a certain amount of scorn for his father, who was a simple business man and had not even a secondary education. Neither Athens nor Rome could mean much to him. Freud's interest in antiquity was therefore touched with guilt feelings. So were his

journeys to foreign countries. Neurotic reasons, as he says, prevented him for fourteen years from going to Rome. He did not even dare to plan a visit to Athens. "It must be" he says, "that a sense of guilt is attached to the satisfaction of travelling so far, to go such a long way. There is something about it that is wrong, that from the earliest times is forbidden. It has something to do with a child's criticism of his father, with the under-evaluation which takes the place of over-evaluation"³¹. "Only after the death of his father and his subsequent self-analysis was he free not just to dream of antiquities but to collect them. And in his daily psychoanalytic work with patients and with himself he actually did become an excavator.

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NOTES

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Contribution to Psychoanalysis of Music

by

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- I. *Introduction*
Psychoanalysis and music. Difficulties and resistances. Causes of resistance.
- II. *Bibliographical review*
- III. *Music as a defense against the paranoid situation (against the persecution by the bad objects).*
The Ingrid case. Analysis of a dream. Anxiety situation from which song emerges. The relation between this anxiety and the oral and oedipal conflicts.
- IV. *Analysis of a drawing*
Proof of the results obtained from the analysis of the dream. The technique of "musical defense".
- V. *Scream and sound*
Analysis of both phenomena. Analogy between the results of this analysis and those of former chapters. Synthesis.
- VI. *Music as a defense against the melancholic situation*
Music as means of denying guilt and recuperating the lost object.
- VII. *Music itself is the good object*
Why music is chosen as a means of defense. Music and language in Ingrid's case. Music and erotic union.
- VIII. *End*
The problem of the specific factors in musical sublimation.

SUPPLEMENT

1. *Some anthropological data*
The agreement of this data with the results obtained from Ingrid's case.
- II. *Relation between the conclusions of the foregoing investigations and those of this paper.*

I.

THE analysis of a young woman gave us the opportunity of knowing the processes by which music acquired a special and even vital importance to her. The understanding of these processes may possibly give us access to the problem of music in general.

The unconscious roots and deeper meanings of music are little known. Music — unlike most other branches of activity of the human spirit — has only rarely been taken as a subject for psychoanalytical investigation. The causes of this fact have scarcely been investigated either. One of the difficulties lies in the special nature of music, above all because music does not represent in itself the objects of the external world, as is the case with the majority of the other arts; and it is just these objects with their mutual relationships which comprise the central theme of psychoanalysis.¹ This difficulty, to be sure, is not the only cause of the infrequent application of psychoanalysis to musicology. Analytic experience indicates that behind such a phenomenon there must exist a resistance of an affective nature, that behind this lack of preoccupation with the subject there is a rejection of the subject. As is always true in these cases moreover, there exists a resistance to see and analyse that very resistance.

The first motive for this resistance is found when we consider the conscious meaning that music has for many of its lovers. Some live music as a religion and at times describe it as such; others express something similar in terms more directly erotic, the relation with music in these cases

being like a happy love, which, following the principle of pleasure, rejects any intellectual intervention. Music is something where one is, finally, happy, and so analysis is of no interest anymore. Having found what they were searching for, what they have found opposes any further search. One may suppose that in such cases music (as is frequently true of love) represents a *defense*, more or less well achieved, which one wants to maintain at all odds, and therefore any kind of analysis is rejected. Furthermore, it is to be supposed, that in this defense — just as happens in neurotic symptoms — *the same rejected impulses are partially satisfied*. This instinctive satisfaction would represent another factor which would intervene in the above-mentioned resistance. The considerations presented further on will confirm and complete these suppositions.

II

As regards the psychoanalytic literature on music, in the first place we refer to the paper of *Th. Reik* on "The Shophar" (1919). Drawn by his interest in the origin of music, Reik directs his attention to anthropology and mythology, and later concentrates his study on one of the most ancient musical instruments known to man and the only one that to this day continues to be used in the Jewish cult: the shophar, i.e. the ram's horn. The conclusion arrived at by Reik, through profound and extensive analysis, are, in brief, the following:

The totemic god who was the bull or the ram in the early stages of Jewish religion, was worshipped by the imitation of his roar or bellow. This imitation was made, furthermore, by means of the ram's horn or shophar. According to Freud's "Totem and Tabu", Reik says that the imitation of the voice of the totem represents at one and the same time the presence of and identity with the totem, i.e. the father. Thus, the use of the shophar in the cult has the following meanings: in blowing the shophar the priest identifies himself with the god (father). On the one hand, this identification comes from the desire to have the power of the father,

and on the other hand, it comes from the love for him, augmented by reaction. But at the same time it has another meaning. It must move and frighten. For the voice of the shophar, resembling the roar of a bull being killed, must remind those who hear it of their erstwhile sin, the murder of the archfather, repeated in phantasy by each succeeding generation. In other words, it must awaken the feeling of guilt and lead to repentance and moral betterment. Thus in the ritual as in an obsessive symptom, completely opposing tendencies unite: feelings of guilt, repentance, and rebellion. At the same time as *this musical ceremony has to protect the hearers against the hostile tendencies, which incite them to the repetition of the arch sin, it also represents its exact repetition. For the voice of the ram's horn is the voice of the murdered father (totem, god).*

By a different path, that of biology, Pfeifer approaches the same problem of music.² He agrees with Darwin that the music of animals is intimately related to their sexuality. Toads "sing" in their periods of copulation, and are also the first animals that know how to transform the air (i.e. a substance foreign to the body) into a substance of their own. The air is then treated as a part of the body and charged with narcissistic libido.

Since music belongs to the mechanisms of forepleasure (Vorlust) of copulation, its origin must be searched for in a stage prior to the genital. On the ground of some biological considerations on the development of the libidinal discharges in the animal kingdom, Pfeifer arrives at the conclusion that in one of the evolutionary stages the organism discharges its libidinal tension by means of the expulsion of a substitute matter, for example the air through the larynx (i.e. an erogenous zone). This is the birthplace of song, and thereby of all music. Musical sound is therefore an "ejection" of stagnated narcissistic and auto-erotic libido of a sexually excited organism which has not yet reached real object-sexuality. Song is an attempt to discharge the libido in a form prior to that of genitality.

In a second part of his investigations, Pfeifer deals with musical expression. Music is expression. Its content is not of an "object-relationship" nature. This corresponds to the narcissistic and auto-erotic character of music; it can express the processes *within the ego, which are charged with narcissistic libido, especially the vicissitudes of the instincts, inasmuch as they refer to the ego*. Music is an art of "systems of reminiscences of the ego".)

In music — Pfeifer continues — there lives a "Weltanschauung" corresponding to the narcissistic orientation of the libido: *animism*. The magic of breath — the ejection of a substance charged with narcissistic libido — plays an important part in both animism and music.

Sterba in his paper "Toward the Problems of the Musical Process" bases his ideas on a number of personal experiences, i.e. the transformation of musical thoughts into images in the moment of the hypnagogic phenomenon. In the first place, he arrives at the conclusion that the melodic movement and the pleasure connected with it is the essence of the experience of music. For Sterba, this pleasure of movement in music is a regressive repetition and an idealized intensification of the *bodily pleasure in primitive infancy in which the discovery of the limbs and their movements is followed by a gradually acquired domination over the entire body*.

The kinesthetic experiences of early childhood also make possible the *first relation with the environmental space*. This happens when the boundaries between the ego and the external world are still confused and rudimentary, when one still tends to consider the external pleasures as parts of the ego, and when the *confluence between the ego and the external world* causes the basic experience of the "oceanic feeling". *Individual motricity not only constitutes a primitive narcissistic pleasure, but also affords a model for the domination of the objects in the external world*. In early childhood, bodily movements are acts of imitative magic. The magical movements, (the basis of all imitative magic) are possible,

owing to the abolition of the boundary between the ego and the object. The acting person and the object that is influenced become one. The factor movement in music, therefore, not only causes a regression to a kinesthetic pleasure of early infancy, but also the intense pleasure of experiencing the dissolution of the boundaries between the ego and the external world. *(This dissolution — through motor activity — identifies the domination over one's own body with the ideal domination over the cosmos and, in this manner, the possibility of experiencing the unity between the ego and the cosmos.)*

III

While the investigations we have referred to, and to which we shall return later on, are based on anthropological and biological material and on auto-observation of hypnagogic phenomena, the present paper is mainly based on clinical material. In the first place, we shall state some data from the case history of the aforementioned patient.

Ingrid, a girl of twenty years of age, had developed schizophrenia. After insulin shock treatment, her condition having somewhat improved, she came to be analyzed. From early age, and particularly since puberty, she was a very introverted girl and lived in a world of phantasy and books. She also loved music very much, though only in a passive way, in listening to it. During analysis she began to learn singing. This rapidly became something very important and "luminous" in her life.

As to her family relations, she got on very badly with her father. The violent hatred she felt for him was above all else, (as later emerged in the analysis) a reaction-formation against her positive oedipal impulses. Her relations with mother and brother — the latter four years her junior — were on the face of it much better. We shall refer further on to the deeper positions. We will only add here that a few months before she was taken ill, she began sexual relations with a young man of whose love she did not feel quite sure, continuing these relations during her analysis.

At one stage of her treatment, when singing was already of great importance to her, Ingrid had a dream which is of special interest for our subject.

The day preceding the dream she was worried about the fact that her menstruation had not appeared, and was afraid she was pregnant. At the same time she desired to have a child, but rejected this desire consciously, because she was not married and because of her parents' reaction. With great care she concealed her love affair from her family and from the world.

The dream was the following: "I was walking along the street — it was in a port in England, or on a beach —, I was walking with someone. A stork came flying in the opposite direction, on my left. That must be an omen — I thought — and was afraid that it was an evil omen. I had to ask somebody; I went to the port to ask. There I meet a short man whom I ask; he only reached up to my shoulders, he had protruding eyes and skin like parchment. We went away and he was biting my breast. I was terribly afraid — a primitive fear — like that of newborn children or animals — his eyes protruded more . . . , he was like a witch . . . it seemed to me that he would take all my life away by biting my breast. In this fear I started to sing, I sang the Ave Maria. The little man became less dangerous. I was reassured, quietened".

To cite only the most important of the associations:

"It was that Ave Maria which the sister taught me in the Mental Hospital. She was very nice, very good to me. This Bach-Gounod song is very beautiful; in Latin it is: Ave Maria Gratia Plena. "Gratia" has two meanings for me: grace and forgiveness. This song saved me (in the dream); it was also the first I sang to my singing teacher. . . You already know the horrible fear I have of injections; lately I give them to myself and — I am ashamed to tell you — while I do so I sing. It's magic; I am not afraid any more.

The little man was like a gnome . . . something magical. . . It is a fact that life can be drawn from a breast . . .

a child does it . . . he sucks life from the breast . . . life flows in that direction . . . that is why I appealed to the Virgin Mary.

It could hardly be that I were the gnome . . . I don't know of anyone who is as short as the gnome, with the exception of the Boy (nickname of Ingrid's brother) when he was small . . . I couldn't stomach him. . . I kicked him to pieces . . . he used to be very nasty, very spoiled, 'mother's darling'.

The stork brings children . . . the evil omen is that I am going to have a baby, though this is not at all evil because it must be very beautiful.

The gnome had skin like parchment . . . yours was like that before . . . old people are like that . . . my 'old man' . . . old aunts . . . I was afraid to kiss them, they were like witches . . . I loathe old people''.

Up to this point, the patient's associations. In the analysis of the dream we shall now confine ourselves to the aspects that are of importance to our subject.

What we wish to point out in the first place is the situation that gives rise to her singing. The dreamer sings in the moment of most grave danger of her life in search of help against an oral-sadistic assault, directed against her breast in which she feels her life is concentrated. The song is directed to a mother-image who, according to the double meaning of "grace", is both beautiful and forgiving. Song, therefore, represents here a call for aid to the good mother, i. e. a means of defense against the anxiety resulting from the attack by a bad object. This badness is the projection of her own oral sadism³. Partially anticipating what we shall presently set forth, we may say that the little man of the dream is a brilliant condensation of Ingrid's oral-sadistic auto-imago and of the oral-sadistic imagos of her mother, father and brother. Furthermore, it is the image of the desired and feared son. This last aspect being the most manifest of the dream, we shall deal with it first.

Ingrid sees the stork and goes to ask what this bad

omen means. The behaviour of the little man is the answer: to have a son, which in turn means that the latter will take her life, by means of his assault on her breast. This fear comes from the unconscious perception of her own oral-sadistic phantasies directed against the maternal breast. Therefore, to be a mother means to be exposed to the same oral aggression, which originates the fear of death. *In this aspect, the song is a reaction of Ingrid as a mother, when faced with the murderous oral assault of the son.*

We leave for later on the analysis of this reaction — the singing — and for the moment continue investigating the meaning of the anxiety situation in the dream.

The little man, then, is at bottom herself, and the Ingrid of the dream is her mother, whom she attacks and kills. The one who has to "forgive" is logically the one who was assaulted. This attack, as it appears in the dream, belongs to the oral child-mother (breast) situation. But the fact that the Ingrid of the dream is in the place of the mother, considered in connection with Ingrid's present genital life and her old and now renewed desire (and fear) to have a child, (renewed when her menstruation did not appear), shows that here we have, at the same time, a reflection of the *oedipal desire to take the place of the mother towards the father*. Furthermore, the failure to menstruate increases her fear that her genital life will be discovered by her parents. This fear not only emerges from the present circumstances, but also from the old oedipal feelings of guilt. On this level, the little man therefore represents the mother (the witch) who punishes (kills) her for her sexual and aggressive oedipal desires. The song is, in this aspect, a supplication to the mother who forgives, to protect her — Ingrid — from the mother who punishes. The punishment is represented in images of the first period of life, where being forsaken by the mother — by the breast —, the emptiness due to the loss of the object, is experienced like being emptied⁴.

Besides, the first oedipal desires towards the father were of an oral nature. The little man — the "old man" — is her

father on to whom she projects her own oral desires for his penis⁵. The mother must forgive her especially these desires, and protect her from them; (escape into homosexuality as a defense against incestuous heterosexuality).

To this must be added that the father (and his penis) is not only the object towards which she directs her libidinal desires (frustrated by the mother), for at the same time he is the feared and hated seducer and, in another plane, her rival in respect to the mother. In this sense the little man is the father whom she wants to castrate (bite the penis) and destroy and whose place she wants to usurp in his relation with the mother. Ingrid's present sexual life also has the meaning of killing the father, who was and still is the perturber of her love relations. In this way, the present situation evokes the old fear of punishment because of her aggressiveness against the father, a fear which is experienced in the dream in one of its archaic images.

Leaving aside other aspects of the dream, we only wish to refer to the fact that the associations imply that the little man also represents the brother. When the latter was born, Ingrid was in the full oedipal period. Her desire to be in the mother's place became still more acute and dangerous, because she projected onto the nursing brother her own oral sadism, newly evoked because of the new oral and oedipal frustration and envy. Furthermore, the frustrations suffered with the father, caused Ingrid to displace her oedipal (and oral) tendencies onto the brother.

To summarize: the little man is the condensation of the persecuting oral-sadistic⁶ and oedipal objects; he is the image of the frustrations and mortal punishments, formed on the basis of and as a consequence of her own oral-sadistic and oedipal impulses towards the mother, the father, and the brother. It is in defense against the anxiety in the face of such dangers, that Ingrid directs her song to the Virgin Mary, the good mother⁷.

IV

Before directing attention to the fact of singing, let us consider another product from the unconscious of the same patient. This time it is a drawing she brought with her one day.



The most important associations that Ingrid has in relation to this drawing are the following:

"He is a snake charmer . . . a gnome, because he has pointed ears. First I wanted to draw a dancing girl, then I changed it. He is Asiatic. He has hardly any nose, because I have too much nose. I like the small mouth; it is set low in the face like children's mouths; I like that. A snake is nearly at his face but he is not afraid of it. The pointed ears are a sign of degeneration, he is a mixture of man and animal, he has something demoniac about him. I

like the gnome. I wanted to be an Asiatic, that's my "craze". Those people have great attraction for me. The way they walk, like feline animals, like tigers or cats. I like the philosophy of the Asiatics; it is the affirmation of life with everything, with sadness and suffering, it is perfect.

"The serpent — the one of the Bible — the original sin . . . with that they passed from childhood to adulthood. Why did they lose paradise? As a girl I took it literally. Because they ate the forbidden apple, like a forbidden piece of candy. — The serpent has seduced them. Its tongue is cleft by falsehood. As a girl I often looked in the mirror to see if my tongue was cleft. It was awful. Then they took the serpent's legs away as a punishment. The serpent is seduction. I was always terrified by snakes, as a small girl in the zoo, then on the ranch. I die of fear. They cannot be reckoned with, they sting and one dies. One has no defense.

"The charmers make the snakes dance. *When he stops playing the snakes attack him.* He is a young boy".

Before all else we see music again as a defense against bad objects. This badness is here again a mortal aggression of an oral-sadistic nature. The snake is seduction, says Ingrid, and is shown to be so by her associations and by analytic experience on all levels: it is the seduction coming from the father, on whom her own oral-sadistic impulses directed to his penis, are projected, and it is the seduction coming from the mother, on whom in turn are projected her own oral-sadistic impulses, directed to her breast. In more complete terms, the serpent, like the little man of the dream, represents her own libidinal desires (oral, anal, and genital) and her aggressive desires projected on to the objects (parents) towards whom they are directed; and at the same time it represents the dangers — frustrations and punishments — which are associated with them.

Thus, here again, music is a defense against the badness of these seductive, frustrating, destructive, punishing objects, or against the dangers of her erotic and aggressive instincts. Both in the dream-song and as in this drawing

this defense is carried out with the mouth, i.e. with the same organ as the aggression from the bad objects (little man and snake). Furthermore we see that the *aggressor* of the dream is qualified with the same name as the *attacked* magician of the drawing, i.e. the "gnome". Both of them (the charmer as well as the little man) have something "demoniac" about them, according to the patient's words. The Asiatic who dominates the fear of the snake is at the same time compared to the tiger which, in the childhood persecution dreams of the patient, represented the same objects as the snake in the drawing. The snake hypnotizes, says Ingrid, and we may add: just as the snake-charmer does. Hence there exists a certain identity between the subject which defends itself and the object which attacks. We can also say that the techniques of defense is that of *identification with the aggressor*, or, the technique of "*driving out the Devil with Beelzebub*".

The very word "encantador" (charmer) relates magic with "canto" (singing). But the gnome of the drawing does not sing, he plays the flute. We know through analytic experience, as well as through popular literature and language, that the flute is a phallic symbol. Therefore we see in the flute playing, the return of the repressed in the defense: it is the *fellatio*, primary representation and desire for coitus. Moreover it is again Beelzebub who drives out the Devil; for at the same time it represents the identification with the frustrating father: the flute is the illusory penis with which the patient defends herself against destruction if she yields to her oedipal feminine impulses. Ingrid does not draw the dancing girl as she intended to at first, but a boy with a flute⁸; the snakes are the destructive penis of the father against whom she defends herself with masculinity⁹.

Ingrid's music therefore represents, just like a neurotic symptom, a transaction between the instincts and the ego; she satisfies her impulses at the same time defending herself against their inherent dangers.

V

We now leave the drawing to direct our attention to singing and music itself as a means of defense against the aforementioned dangers.

The fundamental reaction against displeasure and anxiety has been, since the beginning of life, the scream. We are born screaming. The reaction we should expect for example from our dreaming Ingrid in her "primitive fear" which she compares to the "fear of newborn children" is the scream. But instead of screaming Ingrid *sings*.

In their physical aspect it is already evident that scream and song are intimately related. Tone — a basic element of song — is a scream of a specific character differing from the scream in the regularity of its vibrations, or expressed in psychological terms, differing in being submitted to a certain order. Tone compared to scream represents for this same reason, — always in its psychological aspect —, a renunciation of something instinctive (Triebverzicht). Instead of the unrestrained scream, which is on the one hand an aggressive expression of a respiratory-oral nature, arisen as a reaction or defense against the sufferings and anxieties caused by frustrations of instinctive needs, and which on the other hand is an expression of demand for the satisfaction of these instinctive needs, — instead of this unrestrained scream, the tone appears, which, physically, is a scream of regular vibrations and which psychologically we experience —compared to screaming—as being less aggressive, as a more erotic, less terrified, and less terrifying expression. Thus, in the first approach to the psychology of music as such, in viewing one of its fundamental elements, i.e. tone, we already find a full analogy with what we had seen in the analyses of Ingrid's dream and drawing:

1) Tone is a transformed scream; the latter is a defensive reaction to anxiety, like Ingrid's music. In the first period of life, the scream is above all the reaction to hunger and oral frustration. We know that these frustrations

represent the basis of experience of the "bad objects" and of the "oral-sadistic anxieties" (M. Klein). If it is true that tone is born from scream, then music constitutes in its (ontogenic) root a defensive reaction against the "bad objects".

2) As we saw in Ingrid's drawing that in the defense (i.e. in music) the repressed (the instincts) return, thus we also saw in the scream the expression of the respiratory and oral sadistic impulses; therefore the latter, though modified, will also be contained in tone and in music.

3) Tone — as expressed above — represents a renunciation on the instinctive plane; but while it represses the aggressiveness of the scream, it also expresses it. We observe the same in another transformation the scream undergoes. Children are trained to replace the scream by entreaty. When entreating, the instinctive demand of the child continues to exist but in a more subdued form. Entreaty and song were united in the beginnings of human culture. Singing (and music in general) was joined in religious cult, i.e. to the entreaty and prayer to the gods (the projected parents). In Ingrid's dream we also saw that the song which substitutes the scream, was directed to the Virgin Mary, in other words, it was both entreaty and prayer.

4) The first "aggressive" object the child encounters is the mother's womb upon birth. This "attack" rebounds on its respiratory apparatus and leads to the first breath and the first scream. The scream of birth is the birth of scream. This scream represents — expressed in terms of ulterior representations — something like a protest against separation, and, with it too, the desire to return to the mother's womb. It is the first "religious" expression of the human being, since it is the first expression of the desire to *relegate* (rebind) oneself with the lost object, the basis of all religions. Similarly we saw in Ingrid's dream, that her song, which is at the same time prayer, emerges in face of the danger (oedipal and oral) of the loss of the mother.

Apart from the similarity between ontogeny and philog--

eny respecting the unity of religion and music which Ingrid's dream points out, we thus see, that in the same way as Freud holds the murder of the archfather to be the origin of religion, and Reik, to be the historical origin of music, in the dream of our patient the same fact appears (i.e. the murder of the rival mother) as the individual origin of music.

Before proceeding any further, we should like to review in brief the results we have arrived at up to now.

In the first place, we saw that music is at the service of the defense against the bad objects, whose basic foundations are the erotic-destructive instincts which have become dangerous. Furthermore we saw that at the same time these same instincts, especially the oral-sadistic and respiratory-sadistic, are expressed and satisfied in music. We also learned something about the technique of defense. This was, on the one hand, a submission (homosexual) to the mother; to this aspect we shall refer in greater detail later on. On the other hand, it was the technique of identification with the aggressor; the attempt to overcome the superego and the pursuers, i.e. the parents who seduce and attack, frustrate and punish, by transforming oneself into them; to dominate the feared devil by being him; it was, in a word, the attempt to overcome the paranoid-melancholic situation by means of mania. In other terms: to sing is to aggress orally, i.e., to eat the bad parents, which is equivalent to mania. This oral aggression can be accomplished because the superego is bribed at the same time with the renunciation of instinctive satisfactions¹⁰.

We have arrived at similar results in the consideration of the fundamental elements of music: in the example of tone, it could be seen that music, besides being a defense of the ego and a satisfaction of the id, also contains a submission to the superego, by representing a partial renunciation of aggression. To sing is and is not to scream. In other words: the sound at the same time represents an instinctive renunciation and satisfaction. To make it possible for the scream, — born of anxiety and despair, aggression and simultaneously a cry for help and the erotic call for the object — to be trans-

formed into sound, the savage instinctive expression has to submit to an order or law¹¹.

VI

To discuss another analytic aspect — intimately related to what has already been set forth — we must first return to Ingrid's case. We anticipate that this aspect concerns music as a means of *denial of guilt* ("ugliness") and the *recuperation of the lost object, the recuperation of the lost ego, respectively*. It is at the same time an attempt to be born anew, without guilt, to be born beautiful, or else, to become beautiful and good. If, up to now, we saw music above all as a defense against evil and persecuting objects, i.e., as a defense against paranoid anxieties, now we see music as a defense against melancholia.

In Ingrid's case, music was the means employed to become "beautiful". She thought herself very ugly. We know that behind such a feeling of inferiority there are above all the feelings of guilt due to her oral sadism, her homosexuality, and her Oedipus complex¹². These impulses are repressed, the ego submitting masochistically to the cruel superego. The tensions between the ego and superego, and the feelings of guilt which this tension engenders, create a great need to be good and beautiful, and a great need to be loved. In Ingrid's case, from a certain point in her evolution onwards, the principal means in achieving this goal was music, or more precisely, singing. It is a matter of a defensive mechanism, since at the very bottom what is bad is the object and not the ego. As melancholia in a certain aspect is a defense against a paranoid situation, or in Freudian terms, as the lamentations of the melancholic are accusations against an object, thus singing too — which is always a search for, and even an imploration to the object — is at bottom the scream, i.e., an aggressive "abreaction" against a suffered aggression. *The scream submits*—if this expression is permissible—*melancholically to a demanding superego and is transformed into song*¹³.

Applying this to Ingrid's case: to be beautiful is *not to be ugly*. Ingrid tries to deny her ugliness, i.e. mainly her oral aggressiveness, by singing. Again we see the technique of "driving out the Devil with Beelzebub", since singing is to aggress (scream) and is not to aggress (singing is *not* screaming). In this last aspect (singing is not screaming, *not* to aggress) singing represents an expression of love. Thus, as the scream contains an erotic expression (though of a very infantile love), beside its aggressive content, singing also represents loving at the same time; and is not only, like the scream, a *demand* to the loved object, not only desire, but there is something of the love that *gives* too, something of the mature feeling of love in singing¹⁴.

Adding what we have just seen to a synthesis already expressed, we may put it as follows: singing appears as a compromise between the id, the ego, and the superego. Erotic and aggressive desires of all levels (fundamentally oral) are expressed in it. The superego expresses itself in the partial renunciation of aggressiveness (not to scream) and of direct sexuality. The ego expresses itself not only in its defense mechanisms, but also in its work of synthesis between the demands of the id and the superego, elaborating the "beautiful". This must serve as a means of denying guilt, and as a means to the recuperation and domination of the introjected (superego) and projected objects, or to the acceptance of the ego by these objects¹⁵.

VII

The question that now arises is the following: *What are the factors that cause the aforementioned tendencies to use specifically music?* In other words, from all the means that offer a possibility of satisfying these individual instinctive needs, and also of satisfying the demands of the superego (sublimation, social valorization, etc.), from all the means which serve that end, why does Ingrid choose music? The answer that this choice is due to the talent and success with which she pursued her study of music is not enough. It is

not enough because, firstly: talent and external stimulants also existed long before she chose music as a means to overcome melancholia; secondly, because she had other talents and other external stimulants at her disposal; and thirdly, because she was not sure of her musical talent and had still not had any success when, with great enthusiasm, she made this choice.

To approach this problem, two points of view will have to be adopted: first, the aspect of the evolution of the patient, and second, the aspect of music as such. Concerning the latter, we anticipate that music in itself *not only seems to represent a means to obtain the good object, but itself represents the good object, which loves and therefore is loved*¹⁶. In viewing this aspect, we should also have to consider by what factors inherent in music and the musician, the former has the faculty of representing such a good object.

Considering the first point, i.e. the evolutionary factors of the patient which determined the choice of music as a means of saving herself from destruction and as a means of recuperating the object, (the overcoming of the paranoid situation and of melancholia) we shall cite some facts from her personal history.

With reference to the defense mechanism in the paranoid situation, we have already pointed out, in our consideration of Ingrid's drawing, that the defense consisted in an identification with the persecuting object, that is to say, in her becoming the pursuer herself and thus converting the objects into the persecuted or the dominated. Song is at bottom the expression of oral aggressiveness. We saw that in the snake-charmer with the flute, the repressed returns in the defense. But song and music in general represent, at the same time, a melancholic submission to the superego. On the level of melancholia music is the means of defense against the loss of the object (of the superego). Guilt and *especially oral guilt has to be denied by means of the beauty (kindness) of the things which emerge from the mouth*. In Ingrid's

case *language* also plays an important part: to speak well meant the possibility of being loved, of denying oral guilt.

Ingrid is of Polish-Jewish origin. Her parents moved to Belgium, where Ingrid spent most of her childhood. To be a foreigner, to speak differently from the rest, meant to be rejected by her companions and furthermore it meant to be the daughter of the Jew, the foreigner, and "exploiter of the people who gave them shelter". In its deeper sense it meant her own guilt due to her oral desires towards her father's penis and her mother's breast. Deeper still, it meant the persecuting evilness of these same objects. This evilness of the objects and her own oral guilt had to be denied by speaking well, by speaking without a foreign accent. Hence her intolerance of her own bad accent and that of others, and the fact that Ingrid was developing a very special talent for languages. The erotization of language as a means of recuperating the objects was remarkable in her. But, nevertheless, it was not a sufficient means, and Ingrid replaced it mainly by music.

Now the question presents itself: why was language not enough, and why did Ingrid turn to music to replace this insufficient means?

In the first place, language connects one with real objects, besides referring to them in its content. As these objects are so dangerous (because of the projection of her own aggressiveness, especially oral) she prefers to go to a world devoid of references to real objects, and where one does not necessarily direct oneself to other real objects. (In this last aspect one must take into account if only superficially, the fact that to make music alone and for oneself passes for "normal", is accepted by the environment. This is not the case with talking when one is alone.)

In the second place, Ingrid used language to a high degree for aggression; she was very "biting" and knew well how to "poison" with her tongue (the feared serpent: an auto-*imago*)¹⁷. The feelings of guilt due to this oral aggressiveness manifested themselves in various struggles with these ten-

dencies, as for example, in her strong disapproval of gossiping — an impulse of whose intensity Ingrid was fully conscious—. On the level of language, therefore, she could not recuperate the lost objects.

In such a conflict with the real and introjected objects (superego), she searches for a world beyond object-relations. Genetically it must be the narcissistic state in the mother's womb and probably also some passing states of internal peace from the first period of her life that she tries to retrieve through music. Music seems to contain a happy relation with a good object which is not even perceived as such, i.e. as object¹⁸.

This happiness, "beyond this world" is the one which many musicians describe when referring to their states of creative and also reproductive musical inspiration¹⁹. What is experienced as the object in this case, is music itself. An analyzed patient, an enthuasiastic musician once told us: "Many years ago I read a sentence of a Jewish mystic that said: 'Thirty years I searched for God, until after these thirty years I realized that it was God who was searching for me'. I never understood this very well. But the other day, after having played Mozart with great enjoyment, it occurred to me that for thirty years I thought that it was I who loved Mozart, until I discovered that it was Mozart who loved me. In great musical works — said the patient — there is love of the musical creator, love which is received by the one who connects himself with the work". This sensation of loving and being loved compared to sexual ecstasy, this sensation of a happy unity with the good object, gives us ground to affirm that music not only represents a means of defense against the bad objects, and a means of recuperating the good ones, but moreover it represents the good object itself. And it is just this, the inherence of the good object in music — its restitution — which makes music an apt means for those defenses. The connection with the good object affords protection against the bad one and the identification with its transforms the bad ego into a good one²⁰.

VIII

We now arrive at this problem: what are the specific factors of music itself, which make it possible for it to be a means of defense as well as a representation of the good object? The investigation of the problem in all its aspects, however, would exceed the purpose of this paper. We only want to formulate here some of the problems in greater detail, and at the same time add some further observations.

We may accept that music has its deepest root in the scream and in the belief in its magic — a belief possibly based on the fact that what was desired by the screamer was sometimes obtained. The scream represents an erotic-aggressive expression, especially of a respiratory and oral nature²¹. We may also assume that music uses means prior to the spoken word and to object-representations; that the sharpening, or more exactly the erotization, of hearing may possibly have one of its roots in the attention a small child pays to the arrival of his mother, as it appears to be in Ingrid's case; that this attention in Ingrid's case represents at the same time the escape from the terrifying intrapsychic processes from which the mother should have protected her²² etc. But for all this something important still remains unanswered: How did music emerge from all these roots, i.e. what are the factors that differentiate the instinctive elements (the scream, etc.) from music, and where do these factors originate? The concept of "sublimation" relates the spiritual product, the new thing, with its origin, its unconscious roots. It is also important to understand what factors intervene to make this new thing emerge from that instinctive root. We have for example mentioned that it is the submission to the parents which transforms the scream into entreaty and tone. This is the instinctive motor to make something new emerge. It denotes a renunciation (or repression) of a portion of aggressiveness, and an increase (real or apparent) of the erotic impulse, but it does not yet fully explain what it is and from where this new thing comes. We should have to direct our attention to music itself, to its fundamental ele-

ments, its forms, to the problem of beauty, etc., to be able to advance further. But this, as we have already mentioned, would exceed the scope of this paper. To finish, we only wish to mention some points about music of a philosophic origin, which, besides being attempts to approach this last problem, are connected in an interesting fashion with the analytic results at which we have arrived.

Thus for example *Leibniz*, the German philosopher of the XVIIth. century, speaks of music as being the mathematical counting of the soul, the latter being unconscious of the fact that it is doing so. The Viennese philosopher and musician *Oscar Adler* affirms that this mathematical counting in music coincides in various aspects with the mathematical counting of the universe. Thus for example the Pythagorean triangle, i.e. the central element of geometry which gives access to the geometrical knowledge of the world, is ruled by the same numeric relations as is the central element of occidental music, i.e. the major chord (3:4:5). Based on these investigations O. Adler arrives at the conclusion that music would constitute something like man's attempt to reunite himself with the laws that rule the universe, i.e. with the universe itself. Thus in our "unconscious" as *Leibniz* points out in almost Freudian terms, there might exist a knowledge which we do not know that we know. It would be a knowledge of the mathematics that rule the world and create its order. Thus as knowledge or truth represents the (mental) unity between the subject that knows and the object that is known, this unity would also be represented in music, in the conception and experience of the beautiful. Science acknowledges as its supreme ambition the formulation of its findings in the mathematical language. According to O. Adler, aspects of the mathematical essence of the universe are reflected in music, and experienced, though unconsciously, in greater or lesser depth.

The bases of these affirmations remain to be investigated; we cite them for the analogy they contain in reference to certain results of our investigation. Just as music, to repeat

our conclusions, is born of the traumatic experiences of the child being separated from the mother, which is the basis of paranoid and melancholic anxieties, and just as music represents an attempt to annul that separation, to defend oneself against the bad objects and recuperate the good ones, so these philosophers also arrived at the affirmation — though in other terms — that music represents an attempt to religate oneself with the cosmic spirit, from which man has been separated, and to reunite with the god, i.e. with the lost parents.

SUPPLEMENT

To continue, some anthropological data will be drawn upon which confirm the conclusions of the present paper, mainly based on the material of only one patient. Then, to close, the results of the analytic investigations referred to above will be related to the results of this paper.

I

In Greek mythology, Orpheus is the creator of music. The myth tells how Orpheus dominated the beasts with his music. Ingrid's drawing is strongly reminiscent of a classical picture which represents this subject.

The animals that Orpheus dominates with music would represent, according to psychoanalytic experience, and as in Ingrid's drawing, the "evil" instincts which must be dominated, or else the bad objects (parents) on whom erotic-destructive impulses are projected. The myth represents a universal inner process; the analogy between the myth of Orpheus and Ingrid's drawing gives the latter the value of an expression of universal content.

Music, as a protection against the bad objects — primitively against the demons and then against the wrath of the god²³ — is found in many ancient peoples, for example the Jews. According to investigations based on the Old Testament, the bells of the high priest are to protect him from

death, by frightening the dangerous demons away²⁴. In certain Greek festivals these and other instruments were used to the same end²⁵. It especially concerned festivals of fertility, which could mean that they were castrating demons above all. We saw something analogous in Ingrid's case. Here also the demons are "object" expressions of man's own sexual and aggressive tendencies and music must protect one against them. Since time immemorial the Chinese make music during eclipses to frighten the demons away which want to swallow up the sun and the earth. In this we recognize Ingrid's oral-sadistic and oedipal anxieties and their especial intensification in the dark. We also find the same principle in the defensive technique, as in Ingrid's case, i.e. that of driving out the Devil with Beelzebub. This is expressed, for example, in the fact that the Arabs call *one of their musical instruments by the same name they give to the groans of the demons* which they believe to be in the desert, and against which they want to defend themselves by means of these instruments²⁶.

Our affirmation on the relation between music and the scream is also confirmed by anthropological material. Gressman states for example that the trombones (in the temple) originally had the same end as the loud screaming of the priests of Baal, i.e. to call the divinity's attention. The soft or silent prayer only appears later in the evolution.

The historical material on the *Shophar* also offers many interesting parallels. The *shophar* is blown for instance, to celebrate the liberation of the Jews from bondage. The relation between music and liberation was pointed out in Ingrid's case. It becomes still more evident when we consider that Ingrid's bondage consists of her dependence on the bad objects, from which music saves her. The Cabala says that the *shophar* is blown "to degrade (or annihilate) Satan". In a similar way the end of music was also for Ingrid the defense against the demon. The Talmud says that "Israel knows how to obtain mercy (forgiveness) from its creator by means of blowing the *shophar*". We saw that Ingrid, too,

seeks the forgiveness of the Virgin "plena gratia" in her dream. The fact that more profoundly it is a matter of the desire to dominate the object, as Ingrid's analysis showed, can also be seen in the Jews: "They know how to dominate their creator by blowing the shophar", says a commentator. Apart from the interpretation that the shophar is blown to soften the Judgment of God — (the shophar is blown especially on the days of the year on which God judges men and decides over life and death) — the explanation is also found that the shophar must serve to confuse Satan; the latter appears in this interpretation as accuser. In Ingrid's case we also saw music as a means of redemption. Moreover, here as well as there, the demon is at the same time seducer and punisher, just as the real or imaginary parents are.

II

Limiting ourselves to the few anthropological data mentioned up to here, the results of this paper still have to be related with those of the foregoing investigations.

In the first place, comparing the results arrived at through Ingrid's analysis with those of the "Shophar" of *Reik*, we see that in spite of the paths of investigation being different, several of the principal conclusions are in complete agreement. The central factor of the psychological situation from which music emerges, is in both cases the mortal aggression committed against the intolerant parent of the same sex, and is due to sexual frustration. We saw that Ingrid sings because of fear of a mortal aggression which she suffers due to her identification with her mother, i.e. due to putting herself in her mother's place in relation to her father, thus eliminating the mother. It is the same fear of punishment which impels the Jews to blow the shophar on the day of judgment, remembering their archcrime and asking forgiveness. We saw that the Ingrid of the dream, in the last instance, is her own mother, and she herself the little man who attacks her like a vampire. In this sense we may say that the song of the Ingrid in the dream is the scream of the

mother cannibalistically attacked, just as Reik says that the sound of the shophar is the voice of the murdered father.

Ingrid's singing is therefore her identification with the mother whom she had cannibalistically destroyed. It is to put oneself rebelliously in the mother's place, running the risk of suffering the same punishment according to the law of Talion, but overcoming this danger through the mother's forgiveness²⁷. At the same time, singing makes her conquer the little man — the image of her own tendencies against the mother —, as the shophar must also serve to overcome the hostile tendencies against the father.

Up to here, complete agreement exists between the results of both investigations. What Reik showed to be the central mechanism in the *philogenetic* origin of music, applying the analytic method to mythological and historical material, the Ingrid case demonstrates as being the central mechanism in the *ontogenic* origin of music.

Ingrid's analysis nevertheless reveals something more: We saw that beneath her oedipal conflict is her oral conflict with the mother. The way in which she wants to destroy her mother, i.e. by biting her breast and taking her life away, makes it plain that the libidinal object over which the conflict emerges, is at bottom the breast and the mother, and only later the penis and the father. Beneath her feelings of guilt for the oedipal crime, is her guilt for the oral-sadistic crime. Therefore it is on this level that the deepest roots of music are to be found, it is in the attempt to defend oneself against melancholia and paranoid anxieties — consequence of the oral conflict — that singing emerges. Thus just as Reik shows that music represents a defense against the oedipal crime — against the repetition of this crime — as well as representing the crime itself, we could also see how singing besides being a defense against the oral-sadistic crime, represents the crime too. The gnome of the dream against whom Ingrid defends herself in the song is the same gnome who in the drawing plays the flute. Here, as there, the repressed returns in the defense.

The antithesis between Reik's affirmations and those of this paper is only apparent. In the same manner as in a neurotic symptom, so in music too, different levels are expressed. Both products, the pathological and the artistic, are precipitated through the genital conflict which originates the regression to an inferior level²⁸. The two aspects—the genital and pregenital conflicts—of these productions, do not contradict but complement each other.

The relation of music with pregenital and regressive levels is affirmed by Pfeifer and Sterba. *Pfeifer* sees the origin of music in the libidinal stagnation. In this concept, i.e. in sexual frustration, lies the main point of connection with the results of this paper. In the human being, frustration is experienced on the deepest levels, as persecution (danger of being destroyed, etc.). The expulsion or "material projection" of the air of which *Pfeifer* speaks, is — on the psychological level and in one of its aspects — equivalent to counteraggression against the persecuting object, of which we spoke when analysing *Ingrid's* drawing. (To drive out the Devil with Beelzebub; the aggressed and persecuted subject defends itself by becoming the aggressor and persecutor).

Sterba stresses the experience of unity between the ego and the objects in musical experience. We have encountered the same through an altogether different focussing of the problem. Furthermore, *Sterba* offers a deeplying explanation of the origin of this experience: musical movement is a sublimated repetition of the bodily movements of first infancy, the control of which is confused with the control over the objects; this is due to the nonexistence of boundaries between the ego and the external world. Based on *Ingrid's* analysis, we may perhaps add that the musical experience, this experience of unity between the ego and the objects, represents the expression of a manic defense against the basic paranoid-melancholic situation. The unity between the ego and the external world would correspond to the fusion between the ego and the introjected objects (superego) of mania.

CONCLUSIONS

A) (Main part)

Ingrid's analysis led to the following results with respect to the origin and meaning of music:

1) Music represents a defense against the paranoid situation; song emerges in the face of the persecution by the bad objects (danger of death, etc.). This anxiety situation is intimately related to the oral and oedipal conflicts of the patient.

2) Music at the same time represents a defense against the situation of melancholia. It appears as a means of denying one's own guilt, and of recuperating the lost object.

3) The defense technique contained in music is the one of "driving out the Devil with Beelzebub" (identification with the aggressor). Through music the bad objects (superego) are magically dominated. This domination, equivalent to the triumph over the bad object (its respiratory and oral destruction) as well as to the pardon of one's own guilts, makes possible at the same time, the satisfaction of the repressed and dangerous "demoniac" impulses in music (i.e. in the defense). Summarizing, it can be said, that the technique of musical defense is the manic technique.

4) This triumph over the superego is possible above all, because music itself represents the good object. Union with music, therefore, gives the power to overcome the bad object, and identification with music converts the subject itself into a good one, i.e. a guiltless one. The manic fusion between ego and superego which is thus produced, is equivalent to the erotic union with the primary objects.

5) The analysis of one of the fundamental elements of music, i.e. of sound, leads to results similar to those obtained through Ingrid's analysis. On the one hand, through sound the "bad" impulses (song is scream, i.e. respiratory-oral, erotic and aggressive expression in the face of frustra-

tion) are expressed; on the other hand, sound expresses the denial of these same impulses (to sing is *not* to scream). In this sense, sound is a compromise between the id, the ego, and superego. At the same time it represents a defense against the loss of the object by submitting to the demands of the superego (defense against melancholia), and a defense against destruction by the bad objects by reversing the roles; (the attacked changes into the aggressor by screaming; expression of the instincts).

B) (Supplement)

A series of anthropological data are an indication that the conclusions obtained through Ingrid's analysis are of general validity and not solely for this case. Furthermore, various important agreements exist between these conclusions and the results of the papers of Reik, Pfeifer, and Sterba.

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FOOTNOTES

1. R. Sterba, in his paper "Toward the Problem of the Musical Process" *Psychoanalytic Review*, 33, N°1., 33:43, January 1946.
2. S. Pfeifer: Musikpsychologische Probleme. *Imago*, IX, N°4, 453:462, 1923.
3. This, in its turn, naturally depends on the frustrations and aggressions which the child suffers from the object, especially from the mother.
4. This punishment follows the law of Talion; at bottom then, the little man's attack is Ingrid's oedipal assault against her mother, expressed on a regressive plane, the oral-sadistic. It is as if the mother should say: "If you want to take my place, you will have to suffer the consequences as well; you will have to suffer what you made me suffer as a mother and as your father's wife".
5. The repugnance of which Ingrid speaks (see above) especially experienced towards her father, whom she regards as seductive and

"perverse", is the rejection of her own oral desires towards the father's penis.

6. The fact that the little man bites and sucks, leads one to suppose that in his image libidinal and aggressive impulses of both oral phases are reflected.
 7. The fact that Ingrid sings to the Virgin has still other meanings: it especially represents the denial of the mother's sexuality, which in its turn contains many meanings (denial of the conflicts — and dangers — inherent in the mother's sexuality, denial of the father's paternity, etc.). But the analysis of the contents of the song would digress from our purpose which is, at the moment, to understand the situation from which song emerges, and not the song itself, i.e. the nature of the defense. The references previously made to the contents of the song are more of a complementary, not fundamental, nature. Nevertheless, the choice of the Ave Maria is significant. We shall return to this further on. (See page 14 on music and religion).
 8. Virilization as a defense against the dangers of femininity — the homosexual defense against incestuous heterosexuality — expresses itself in many ways in the patient. We only mention that in her day dreams her phantasies are often concerned with some day being able to sing the roles of Cherubin (*Marriage of Figaro*) and Octavian (*The Rosencavalier*) which, although sung by women, are both masculine roles who have love relations with representatives of the mother. On a more superficial plane, the boy with flute is the brother (same as the little man of the dream) and the identification refers to him.
 9. The charmer, i.e. herself, has signs of degeneration, as she consciously sees in her father (degeneration equals perversion equals oral and anal desires, according to Ingrid's associations).
 10. Thus there is a special analogy with jokes in which the superego is bribed by means of an intellectual production that permits the satisfaction of the forbidden impulse. In order to produce mania, the superego has to become kind, or a good object has to intervene which will permit the elimination of the (introjected) bad one. The aforementioned bribe of the superego by means of the song (artistic production) is only one factor. Another factor is the composer's creation which the singer uses, and which represents — as we shall see later — the good object, with whose aid melancholia is overcome. The aid consists especially in the possibility of identifying oneself with the good object for the subject to become good as well.
- The affirmation that an intimate relation exists between music and mania is virtually contained in Reik's paper ("The Shopfar"). Its first real enunciation was made, I believe, by E. Pichon-Riviere.

According to Reik, the sounds produced by the "bull-roarer" of the primitives, represents, like the shophar, the voice of the murdered archfather. As, for example, in the case of the "wuri-wuri" i.e. the "bull-roarer" of the Indians of the Alto Xingu, Brazil, this ritual is the introduction into the manic feast.

11. What we pointed out in reference to sound is also valid for **rhythm**, another fundamental aspect of music. Rhythm too, represents a submission to an order — compared with "arhythmia" — because it is, in one of its essential aspects, a mathematically regulated division of time, as sound is the same for space (and time). Similarly all melody in its formal aspect is essentially order, because its basic principle is unity in multiplicity. The principles which formally govern melody — at least for Western music — are: repetition, in which we recognize the universal compulsion to repetition, an expression of **Thanatos**, and variation, in which we recognize **Eros**. Without going into detail here, we should also like to point out that in musical elaboration the same mechanisms which we know from the "primary process" intervene in preponderant fashion, i.e. displacement, condensation, inversion, representation by the contrary, etc.
12. See Ingrid's dream: the song is directed to the forgiving mother.
13. In this sense, we must first say that singing (music) is a melancholic defense against the paranoid situation, it means accusation in its deepest — in Freud's terms "Klagen sind Anklagen" — and it is lamentation on a higher plane. As such — i.e. as lamentation — it tries to hinder or annul the melancholic catastrophe, the loss of the object, and is simultaneously a defense against melancholia.
14. This last affirmation in reality, is no more than a reproduction of a sensation. It coincides with Freud's affirmation (first stated in "Totem and Tabu") with respect to the relation between the feeling of guilt and the feeling of love. Thus, as the feeling of guilt is in one of its essential aspects an expression of **Eros**, so also singing i.e. the scream submitted to the superego, is an expression of **Eros**. In both phenomena we find the nostalgia for the lost and murdered object.
15. Singing, as a defense against one's own aggressiveness (sing, so as not to scream or strike) can frequently be observed. In this aspect singing serves to soften the "bad instincts" and as a means of conquering the object (parents, superego).
16. This fact would be one more reason for the strong erotization which musical thought frequently experiences.
17. Ingrid calls her attempts to educate her friends "poisoning them", i.e. she unconsciously perceives that her formative magic influence

has as its instinctive basis her oral sadism. Once again the magician is equivalent to the serpent, the ancient symbol of magic.

18. This last fact is important because it protects her against anxiety. It is as if on a deeper level the following equations existed:
 - a) Separation equals existence of an object equals the evil (equals danger, which causes anxiety)
 - b) Unity equals nonexistence of an object equals the good (equals absence of danger and anxiety)
19. These and the following statements come partly from musicians of our acquaintance, and partly from analyzed patients, dilettants in music.
20. After finishing this paper I have received a letter from a patient of Dr. J. C. Bisi, in which, at my request, he summarizes what came to light in his analysis in relation to music. Among other things he says: "... later on due to grave frustrations which I suffered especially because of my mother, I developed a neurosis which expressed itself on some occasions by total affective indifference towards her, and on others, by aggressive reactions towards her. Since I felt very sad and misunderstood, I turned to music, which had a sedative effect. In the analysis I realized that it represented not only a **call to my mother**, but also it was **my mother herself**, though an understanding and tender mother, who gave me what I could not receive nor expect from my real mother, because of the aggressiveness I had towards her (a product of the experienced frustrations), and the fears originated from the oedipal situation. At a moment when my fiancée was absent and having by that time transferred to her the love primitively directed to my mother, I composed a piece for her which represented the longing I felt for her and also represented my fiancée herself. Many times I compared the music to hallucinations which the lactating child makes of the yearned-for mother".
21. Former investigations showed a close connection between music and anal impulses (Ferenczi). In effect, the same erotic and aggressive impulses whose oral expression we found in Ingrid, also express themselves in her on an anal level.

E. Jones in his paper "The Conception of the Virgin Mary through the Ear" similarly relates the affective charge of the breath, of sound, of the spoken word, etc., with the affective charge which the intestinal gases originally had. This affirmation is based on the following considerations: breath plays a very important part in many religions, cosmovisions, etc. Something of so much importance in adult thinking, must have important relations with something in childhood. "Breath — says Jones — acquires psychic importance only relatively late in life, since for the small child,

the breathing which it effects automatically and which does not awaken its interest, does not come to be conscious". A large part of the interest and effective charge which is later attached to breath, sound, etc., therefore originally belong to another object, to another expelled air, i.e. to the intestinal gases.

This is thus the theoretical basis for the affirmation that the flatus represents the instinctive root of music. But this basis seems doubtful to us. These arguments may be convincing as long as one does not think of that factor which makes breathing something very important for the child from the very first: the scream, its relation with breath, and the consequences of this relation. The scream is precisely in the first period of the child's life a very important means of connection with the vital object and one of the principal means for the expression of its needs and for the discharge of its affections. It is the primary means of calling the object, then it is used to dominate it, attack it, etc. In this function the scream, and with it the child, meet with many and various fates. In view of the importance the scream has in the psychic life of the small child, breath and breathing have it no less, since they constitute the **essential instrument** of the scream. In this function of breathing must lie the primordial cause of its erotization. The perturbations, the symptoms, the sublimations, etc., of breathing must also be related to the meanings which breathing acquires because of its intimate relation with the scream.

We wish to point out that our doubt does not refer to Jones' affirmation with respect to the existence of the relation between music and flatus, but to his denial of the psychic importance breathing has for the small child. There exists, besides, a close relation between screaming (breathing) on the one hand, and the food needs and oral and anal processes on the other.

22. The great sensitization (erotization) of Ingrid's hearing would therefore have one of its roots in the fact that from noise comes salvation. The "sadistic anxieties" impel her to direct her attention outward, toward reality; as these anxieties appear mainly in the dark, they impel her to sensitize her hearing, since the noise reveals the nearness of the good object. Ingrid as a child suffered from **visual** illusions and hallucinations in the dark; noise means — analysis seemed to show — the protective nearness of the real mother.
23. In analytic terms it could be said: primitively against paranoid anxieties and then against melancholia.
24. H. Gressman: Musik und Musik-Instrumente im Alten Testament. (Cited by Reik in "The Shophar")
25. These and the following historical data are cited according to Reik

("The Shopfar").

26. The affirmation of Luther (in his "Table Conferences") that it is possible to drive out the Devil by means of a flatus, seem to obey the same mechanism. In this connection we not only remember the relation between flatus and music, but also that to emit a flatus is one of the favorite habits of the Devil.
27. This situation manifests itself also in Ingrid's choice of the ideal of the ego. Since the time when singing acquired a great importance for Ingrid, her ideal has been the famous singer Kirsten Flagstad. In this choice many factors come into play. This singer's imposing appearance is evocative of an infantile maternal figure. To be her, is what Ingrid desires. Furthermore, it would mean to be accepted by the superego (public) in view of the extraordinary success of that artist. Very important in Ingrid's choice are also the principal roles of the famous singer: like her, Ingrid would like to sing the parts of Isolde and Siglind, i.e., the role of women who also commit an incestuous sin, paying for it with death, but being applauded, that is to say, forgiven by humanity. (See above, note the other ideal of the ego, complementary of this one.).
28. See Ingrid's dream for example.



Subincision in A Non - Subincision Area

by

RONALD M. BERNDT.

IN our "Preliminary Report of Field Work in the Ooldea Region, Western South Australia", I observed that no comparison was made in that area between the letting of blood from the penis incisure and the menstrual flow, and that no common word referred both to the penis incision and to the vulva.¹ Mythological references and traditional songs there seemed to substantiate Basedow's therapeutic theory.² Earlier than this, however, Doctors Géza Róheim and M. F. Ashley Montagu had discussed the possible origin and meaning of male subincision in Aboriginal Australia.³ They contended that subincision was originally instituted in order to cause in the male a parallel to the occasional effusion of blood which is naturally a characteristic of the female, and possibly, also, to produce some feminization in the appearance of the male organ.⁴ Dr. Róheim, in his book *The Eternal Ones of the Dream*,⁵ extends the significance still further on the basis that the subincisure is termed "vagina" or "penis womb".⁶

In re-reading my data for the Macumba area of northern South Australia,⁷ I feel that there is little doubt that Dr. Róheim's assumptions are correct when he says that the incisure is identified with the vulva (or womb), and that the incisure, being a symbolic vagina, may indeed be a substitute for the maternal vagina.⁸ This concept has become clearer to me after my field work in northern parts of the Northern Territory; and in a review of Dr. Róheim's book (*The Eternal Ones of the Dream*)⁹ I realized that such an interpretation could be made after more data were available. In that same review¹⁰ I mentioned that, according to my own material for the central-western area of the Northern Territory, I was uncertain whether or not a clear parallel could be drawn between the menstrual flow and the blood flow of the incised

penis. Now, however, I am comparatively sure that in most areas of the Northern Territory where subincision is practised, and where I have personal knowledge of the rites and their substantiating mythology, there is a definite connection between the male operation and blood flow, and menstruation (or afterbirth blood). This is true for the areas I have mentioned in the above review.

In *Kunapipi*,¹¹ which is a study of an Aboriginal Fertility religious cult of Arnhem Land and adjacent regions, I have mentioned¹² that one meaning of the word *Kunapipi* (which is incidentally the name of the Fertility Mother) is "whistle cock" (that is, a subincisure), and in north-eastern Arnhem Land the ceremonies of *Kunapipi* may be termed *wirri*, meaning incisure. *Kunapipi*, however, means also the uterus of the Mother. The incised penis symbolizes the Snake (Python or Rainbow), the male counterpart in the *Kunapipi* mythology, and the incisure itself the uterus. Symbolically, then, the subincised male member represents both the female and the male organs, essential in the process of generation.

In north-eastern Arnhem Land too,¹³ the incisure is said to have been made originally in order to represent the vaginae of the Wauwalak Sisters (identified with the *Kunapipi*),¹⁴ and the blood coming from the cut (or from subsequent piercing) symbolizes both afterbirth blood and menstruation. In north-eastern and north-central Arnhem Land, where subincision is not practised, the removing of blood from the arm is employed as a substitute. In southern Arnhem Land (that is, in subincising areas) the penis incisure is the vagina of the Fertility Mother, *Kunapipi*, and the flow of blood from it is likened to the flow of afterbirth blood when people originally emerged from the Great Mother. The same comparison is drawn in western Arnhem Land, which is adjacent to the subincising tribes further south.

I shall not here elaborate this point, which is discussed in the above-mentioned volume (*Kunapipi*); and later I shall endeavour to deal with it in greater detail for the central-western area of the Northern Territory. Enough has been

said, however, to show the connection between subincision and menstrual or afterbirth blood, and the mythological identification with the Fertility Mother. Not being a psychoanalyst, I shall make no attempt to examine the possible implication of this interpretation of subincision.

This paper purports to consider the knowledge of subincision in a non-subincising region, and Oenpelli, in western Arnhem Land, has been chosen as an example. Neither circumstances nor subincision is or has been normally carried out by the people living here in immediately adjacent areas. Within recent years, however, circumcision has come in from the east, and has been intermittently practised; while subincision, although found in the south and southwestern region of Arnhem Land, has never been attempted about Oenpelli. Gunwinggu men living in districts adjacent to southern subincising groups, such as near the source of the Liverpool, are occasionally subincised.¹⁵ Although subincision in the south of Arnhem Land is correlated with Kunapipi ritual (see above), it is not considered to be inseparable from this. The Kunapipi may flourish, as it does in north-eastern and north-central Arnhem Land, where subincision is not carried out, although reference may be made to it in song. At Oenpelli the Kunapipi has been only recently introduced, and has brought with it no reference to subincision. Nevertheless, the Oenpelli Gunwinggu (like other tribal groups from western Arnhem Land, including those from Goulburn Islands) have knowledge of subincision; there is some mythology associated with it, but to them it is not ritually significant. That is to say, the rite is not regarded as sacred, although a wooden representation of a subincised penis (see Plate I)¹⁶ may be used as a ritual emblem in some sacred *marejin* ceremonies.

The following substantiating myth¹⁷ for the use of this emblem was recorded in 1947. It was originally the property of Nududmi, Rembarnga, who died as an old man; it then passed to Rarman of the same tribe, and when he died, to

Miburu, who died recently. The story then became common property.

When the western Arnhem Land Fertility Mother attempted the rite of circumcision, the southern Arnhem Landers whom she visited thought, "What about incising?" So they cut the penis incisure, saying, "Perhaps this man will die. If he does we will not subincise any more." The first man they cut was Murbalamba, Rembarnga, who was then camped at the top of the Liverpool River. When they had finished, they suggested, "Now you try to walk." So the man got up and walked. When the people saw that he was all right, they said, "Now we may subincise a number of people!" Then, turning to Murbalamba, "You try to copulate with one of those women there. Then we can see if it's really all right, if the penis stands up and is not sore, and the semen is ejaculated into her vagina."

Murbalamba went over to one woman and told her: "I want to copulate with you, to try out my penis. You lie down and give me your vulva."

"All right," she agreed, and lay down, opening her legs. The other men watched while his penis became erect, and saw that when he put it into her vagina the semen poured out in great quantity.

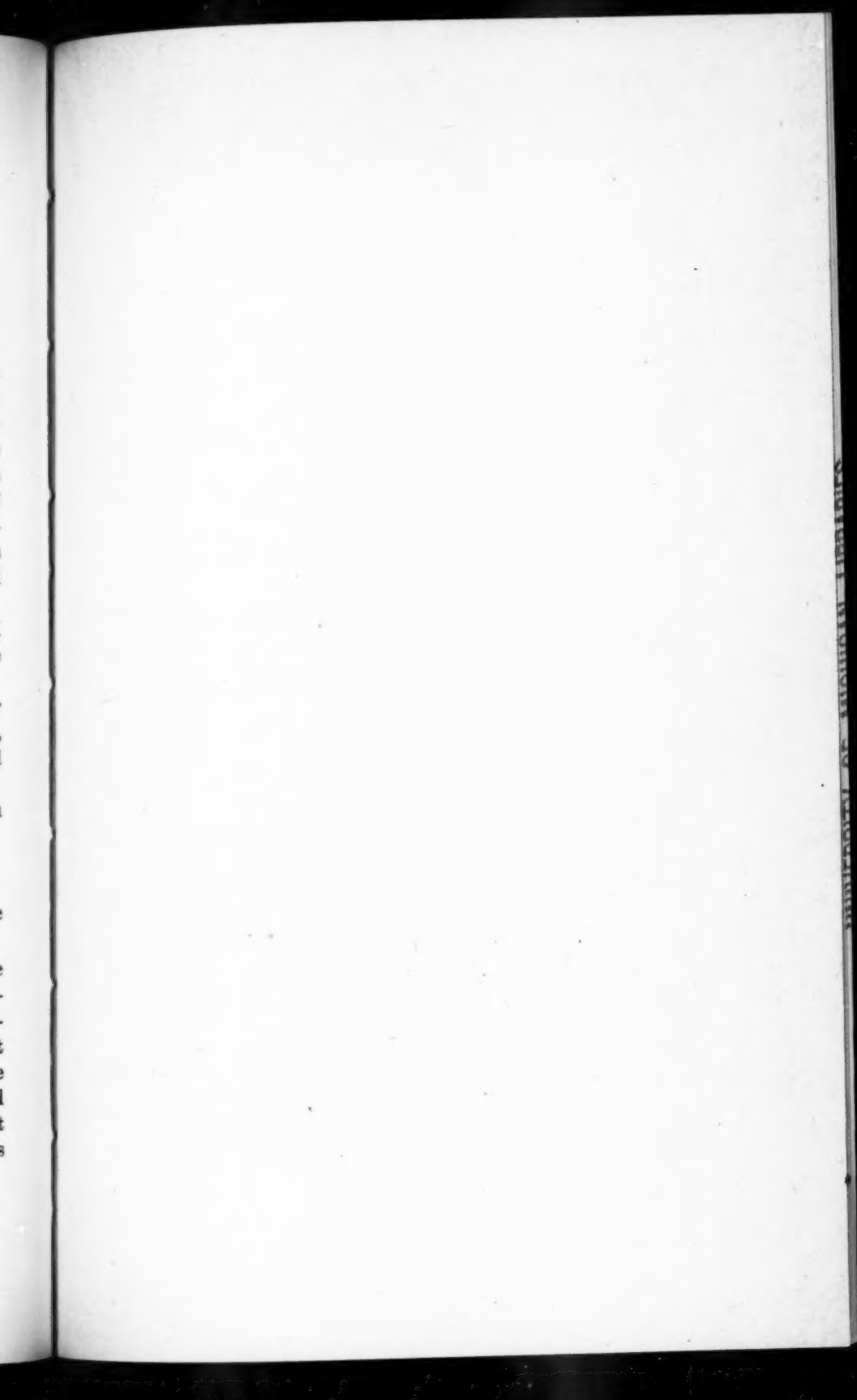
"Ah," they said approvingly, "that's all right." "You like it, Murbalamba?" they asked.

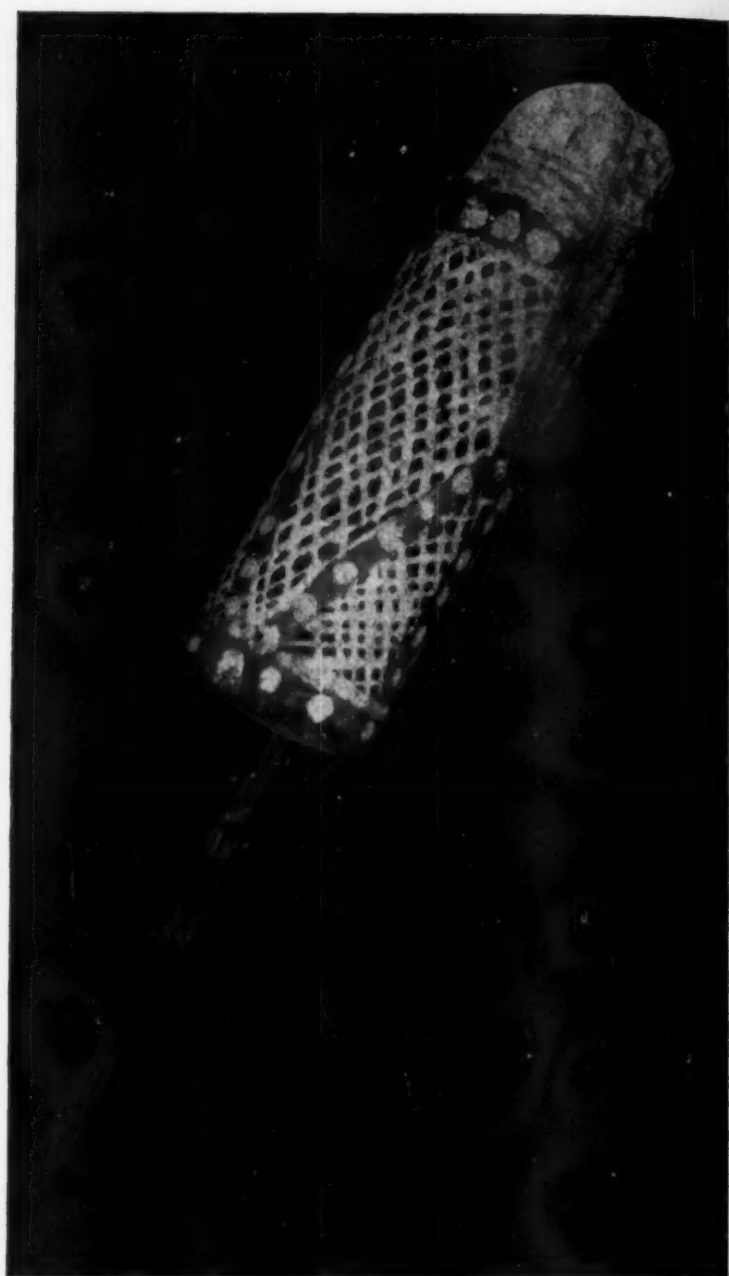
"Yes," he answered, "Better than before."

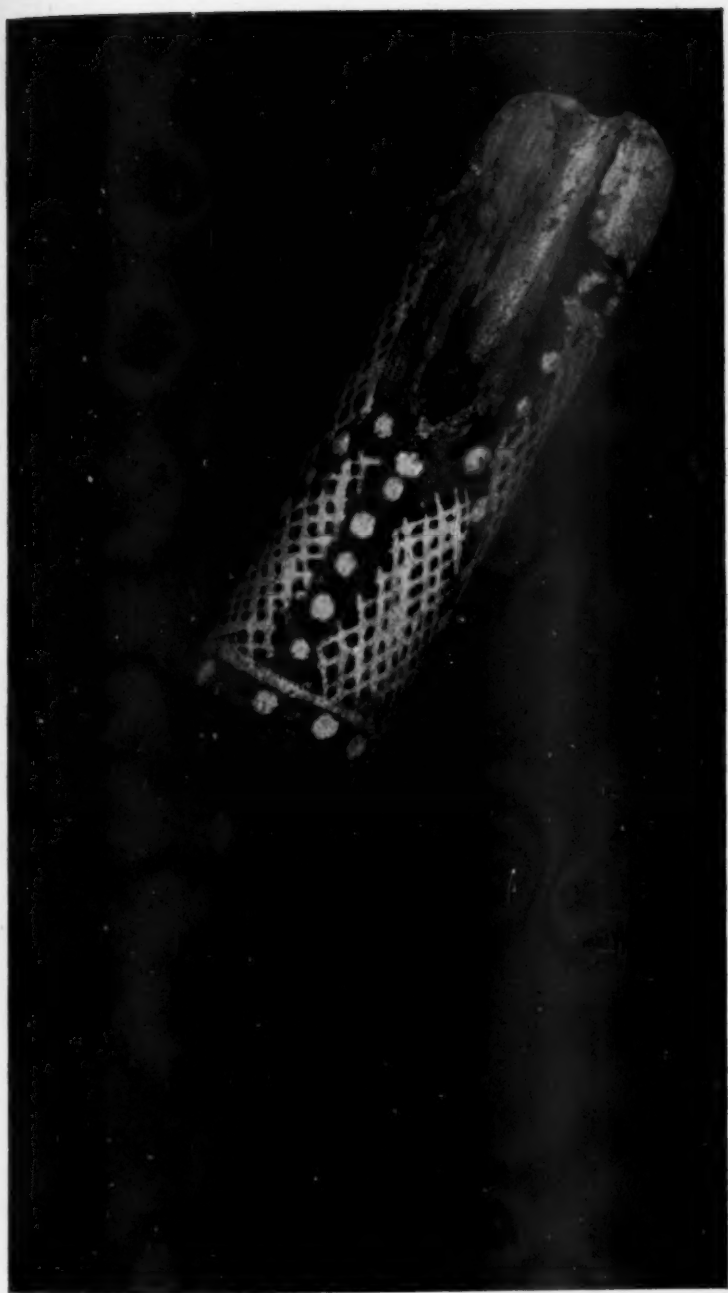
Then they asked the girl, "You like his penis?"

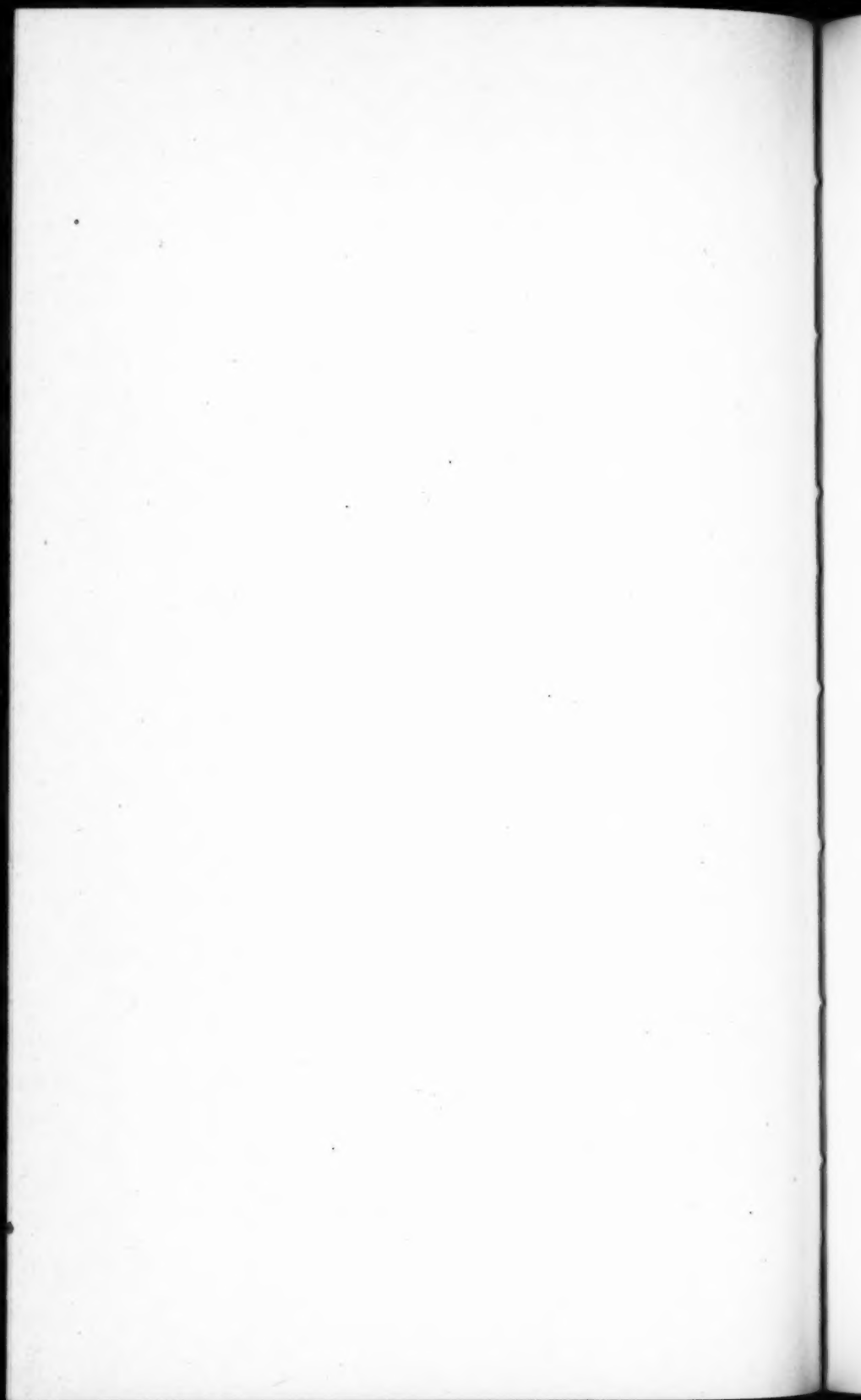
And she replied, "Yes, better with the incisure, for more semen comes out."

In this myth, no esoteric significance is given for the cutting of the incisure; it is simply a lay explanation, dwelling on the erotic potentialities of subincision. This is particularly interesting in view of the fact that informants at Oenpelli, although not subincised themselves, had knowledge of southern Arnhem Land subincision ritual. They stated that the incisure was a vagina, and the flow of blood equivalent to female menstruation (see above). Nevertheless, this









esoteric conception of the significance of subincision was not widely diffused at Oenpelli, perhaps because the rite itself was not practised there. It had come to be regarded as an exotic practice, with an erotic basis. Before considering this aspect, we may cite one other mythological reference to subincision, presented in (Gunwinggu) text.

wainc	namegbe	nawu	birigare	binin	nawu
(1)	those	those	they old (2)	people	those
gabirigeiju		named	nalgo :rol		namegbe
they are called		name	native companion		those
birido:gmej	biribaleburen			gergigen	
they first (3)	they cut each other's incisures			first time	
rere	birimwam	biribeiddaidgej	nawu	named	
afterwards	they came	they cut penis (4)	that	name	
gajeiju	durbu	wainc	biribalebom	birinaŋ	
his name	water	goanna/ (1)	they cut incisure	they saw	
gamag	narbenbugan	nawu	binin	birigerŋe	
(it was) good	we show them	those	people	they "new"	
gabirimbebme	rere			gabindibeiddaidge	
they come out	afterwards			they cut their penes	
gabirirei	go :ro:gu	wainc	gabiridabo:lgmen	wainc	
they go	long time	(1)	they grow older (5)		
gabiribaleburen			gabirijime	na:d	nawu
they cut each other's incisures			they say	we	those
narbenbugan	gumegbe	gabirijime	wainc	boin	
we show them	there	they say		finished	

Notes: 1. untranslatable particle, nearest equivalent in English being "well", or "well then".

2. i.e., Ancestors.

3. in the beginning; i.e., gungare-birimanbune, "in the beginning they (the Ancestors) made."

4. i.e., subincised his penis.

5. become adults.

General Translation:

The Ancestors who were the Native Companion people were the first to cut incisures. Later, they cut the Water Goanna Ancestor. They saw that the incisure was good, and consequently they decided to show all the "new" people (of succeeding generations) this rite, so that they could subincise them when they became adult.

In this brief reference to the mythological substantiation of subincision, from Dangbun-Gunwinggu men, whose country was at the source of the Liverpool River and adjacent to subincising groups, we have the esoteric significance, but no reference to its meaning. Unlike the previous myth about Murbalamba, it is not exoteric, and there is no erotic content.

We may now examine still further the Gunwinggu knowledge of subincision, and for this purpose present another text, relating to the actual rite.

wainc	gabenererei	binin	bɔ:gen	nanila	la
	they two go	men	two	(1)	and
namaraŋ	nagurŋ	gabeneji'meren	garrei		
(1)	"cousin"(2)	they call each other	we go		
gab	nagurŋ	garrei	gab	la mandʒugu	wainc
suppose	"cousin"	we go	suppose and	(3)	(4)
gabenererei	wainc	gabenerergaŋ	gwurcin		
they two go		they two sit down	(in) water		
wainc	gabibeidmaŋ	laug	ga'garme		
	he catches hold of his penis	stone knife	he holds		
wainc	gabijilgbun	wainc	ŋɔ:go	ga'gulbarei	
	he cuts him	at last	blood goes (flows)		
rere	mag	gu'bwiga	gabijilgbun	wainc	
afterwards	then	another time	he cuts him(5)		
gadʒobge	gainɔʒi	wainc	gamilg'mimaŋ	wainc	
he cuts	lower part (6)		he takes middle part (7)		

gawɔn he gives	dʒein (to) fish	gaɣun it eats	manbu that	manbel middle part
bɔin (flesh) finish	wainc there	gumegbe he just sits down		gungulba blood
garei goes out	nuje from him	wainc he presses (8)	gadʒujimi	wainc gungulba blood
ga'bebme it comes out	rɔg all	ganan he sees	gururg hole (incisure)	dʒugu little (9)
mag then	ga'rawɔijilgbun he again cuts		gungudʒi once (more)	wainc
garawɔi'milgman he again takes middle part (10)			manmilgan the middle part	wainc
gawɔi he throws	gawɔn he gives	dʒein (to) fish	gaɣun it eats	ganan he sees
gamag good	wainc he says	gajime we say to him	wainc garimanejime	nagurn "cousin"
ganmanbɔm (you) make me better		wainc I want	ɲadzare he gets hold of	wainc gaman
gungijalg jaw		gundamen blanket lizard	wainc he puts it across	garib'dʒudme
(side to side)	ga'raiɣegwɔn he makes tight		gawalawɔn he widens it	bɔin finish
wainc , wainc	gabenerɛi they two go	wainc we say to him	garimanejime	nawu that
ɔbingurn his "cousin"	ju:n don't	ɣiɣun you eat	mangun wild honey	nawu that
manrurgdʒɔgu (in) little hole (11)	la but	ɣiɣun you eat	mangun wild honey	gure where
gururgwɔla big hole	mai meat	ju:n don't	ɣiɣun you eat	mande might be

jimɔ:g'muŋɔi ba werg jimɔ:g'dɔ:weŋ
 you get sores all the time so that quickly you sore dies

 bɔin wain: gabenebunbun wain:
 (goes away) finished they two finish

 gabenerei gu'red gabenebebme wain: gabiriju
 they two go camp they two come out they (all) sleep

 wain: bɔin
 finish

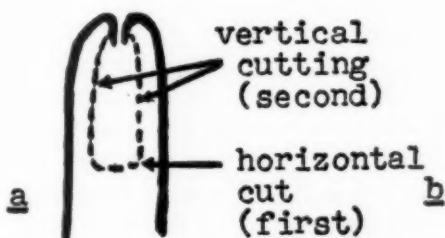
- Notes:**
1. Subsection: the subsection system has within recent years been introduced into western Arnhem Land.
 2. i.e., classificatory wife's mother's brother, mother's brother's daughter's son, etc.
 3. i.e., "too small": the penis duct is too small.
 4. see previous text, Note 1.
 5. see comments below; the second vertical cut.
 6. on penis.
 7. i.e., removes flesh from penis.
 8. i.e., squeezes the penis.
 9. small, or short.
 10. to make the incision deeper and wider.
 11. i.e., not to eat wild honey which has been deposited in a small hole or hollow.

General Translation:

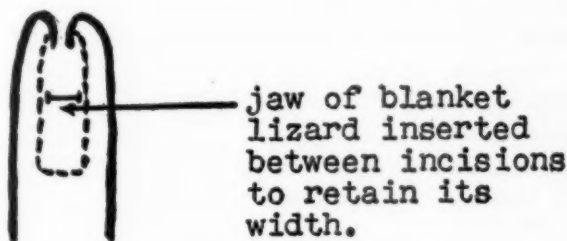
Two men of the *naŋila* and *namaraŋ* subsections, who call each other *nagurŋ*, go to incise their penes, for their urinary or seminal ducts are too small. They go away and sit in the fresh water of a billabong. (If they cut on dry land it would hurt them. One man therefore sits in the water, his penis completely submerged; his companion sits before him and cuts, his hand moving under the surface of the water.) One man holds the other's penis, and begins to incise it with a stone knife. Presently blood begins to flow. He first cuts horizontally (see diagram below), then vertically at each side, removing a piece of fish from the middle. This he gives to the fish to eat (that is, fish equals penis). There they sit until the flow of blood has eased; his companion squeezes the penis, removing blood. They examine the incisure, and see that it is too small. Then he cuts again, mak-

ing the incision deeper and wider, removing more flesh from the middle and throwing it to the fish. He looks at it again, and sees that it is good. He says to his "cousin": "We want to make it even better." He takes the jaw bone of a blanket lizard, and puts it in the middle of the incision between the two cuts making it tight and so widening it (see diagram). (This keeps the incision wide, and when it has healed the bone is removed and thrown away.)

Diagram (from native drawing):
subincised penis.



manbel ("arm"): middle part or piece of flesh removed and thrown to the fish to eat.



His companion warns him that certain foods are tabu to him. He may not eat wild honey from a small hollow log, but only from a large hollow (referring to the size of the penis incisure). He may not eat any meat (identified with the flesh of his penis) or fish (for the piece of flesh removed from his penis has been thrown to the fish); if he did, he would become covered with sores (or his penis would not heal). As soon as the penis is healed, the tabu lapses. The two men then return to their camp and sleep.

From this relatively detailed text, we see that the Oenpelli Gunwinggu have fairly accurate knowledge of how the penis incision is made; and although it does not happen to be correlated with sacred ritual, as in other areas (for example, southern Arnhem Land), supernatural sanctions in the form of food tabus are said to be associated with the cutting.

Informants did not know the approximate age when "novices" were subincised, but stated that it occurred after the subject's marriage. The significance of subincision was not treated in the above text; but informants stated that the incision was cut because the seminal duct was "small", and the cutting allowed "a lot of semen to come out" at ejaculation. This is the significant point made by the Gunwinggu; and we may take it to represent, for them, the exoteric meaning of subincision. According to their knowledge (which in this respect is more or less accurate),¹⁸ the penis at erection causes the incisure and duct 'to widen *like a vulva*', and the 'two prongs of the subincised penis' enter a woman's vagina like a pronged spear. To the Gunwinggu, therefore, subincision is of erotic intent, and has little ritual significance (see first myth of Murbalamba), although it may have a sparse mythology and be associated with tabus, and the incisure itself may be equivalized with the vulva.

Oenpelli informants say they have been told by the Rembarnga that their (that is, the Oenpelli men's) semen comes out only in a small jet, while their own is much more plentiful, and spreads (or sprays) out. They say, too, that it is necessary for the Oenpelli men to copulate for a longer period, while the Rembarnga men obtain a much quicker

ejaculation, requiring to slide the penis up and down only two or three times. (They admit, however, that the quickness of ejaculation would depend on the sexual desire of both partners, and also on whether or not the man had recently had coitus.) There is another 'desirable' feature as well. It is said that a subincised penis during copulation will make a noise in the female's vagina, heightening sexual attraction.

"Here I stayed and copulated,
But the penes were not hard enough.
Where I went I copulated.
There I was 'speared' with the prongs
of subincised penes.
There I copulated and could feel it."

A Gunwinggu songman thus makes an Oenpelli woman extol the pleasures of coitus with subincised men. The reference to 'speared' means that the "pronged" or "split" penis enters her, and as she can feel the action of the penis her pleasure is intensified.

Without presenting additional material relating to the erotic significance of subincision, we may thus observe that an esoteric meaning for subincision is found in areas adjacent to western Arnhem Land, and that this meaning is in more or less fundamental agreement with Dr. Róheim's data for Central Australia. Although an esoteric meaning exists also at Oenpelli, in western Arnhem Land, it is not widely diffused there, mainly because (it is contended) subincision has not become institutionalized. At Oenpelli, as mentioned, it is an exotic rite, and most of the Gunwinggu are acquainted with it by hearsay, although a certain number have heard details from subincised men from nearby tribal territories. It is the women, moreover, who can speak from "experience", for some have had coitus with subincised men. They find pleasure in comparing the relative degrees of satisfaction obtained during coitus with men whose penes are un-circumcised, circumcised or subincised. It is probably in this way that subincision has received much of its erotic association, which remains dominant at Oenpelli.

Analysis of existing ideas at Oenpelli concerning sub-

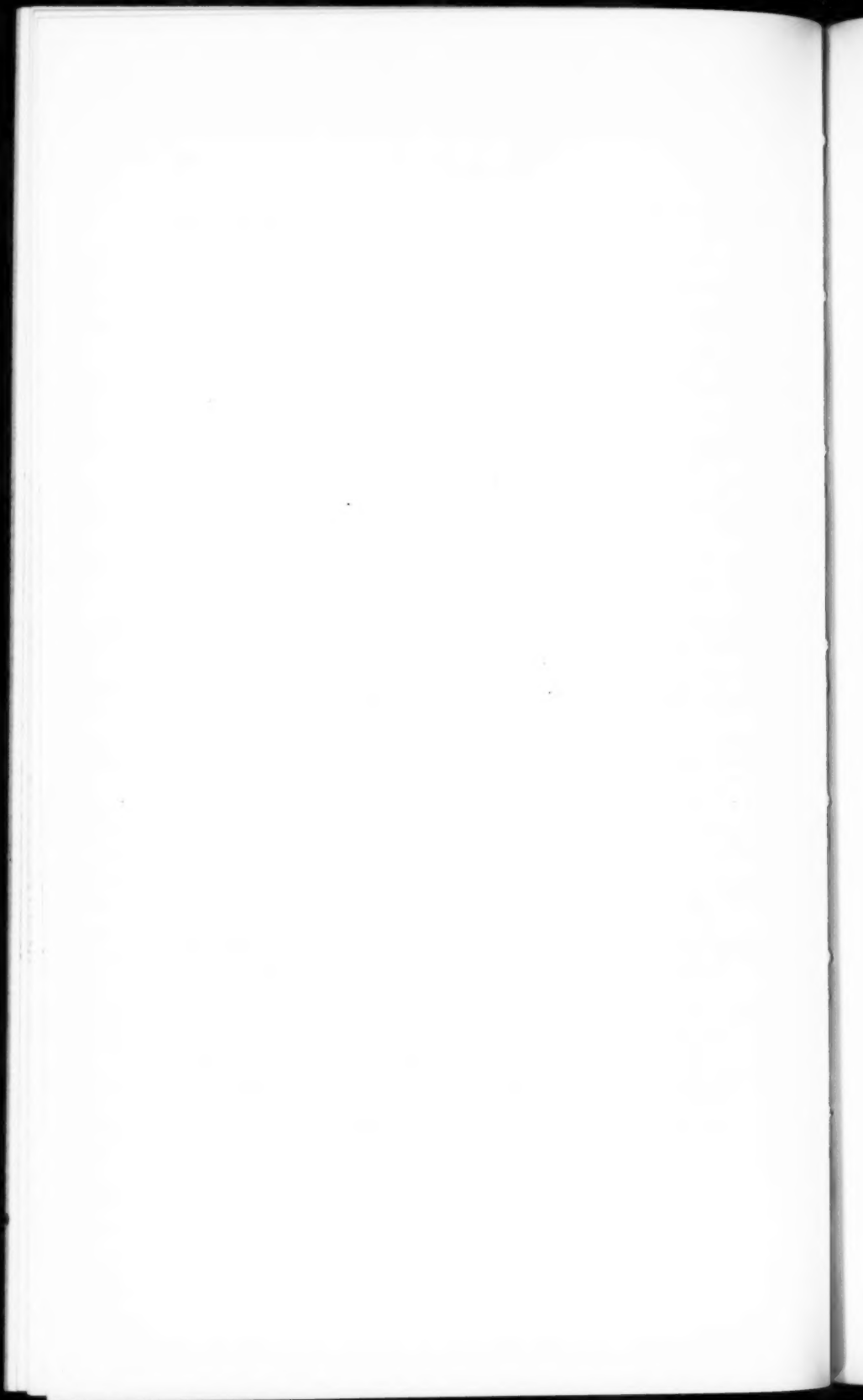
incision reveals (as shown in the second text) relatively accurate knowledge of the actual rite.¹⁹ It suggests male interest in the matter — an interest which could lead to its eventual adoption into the Gunwinggu culture, as has occurred in the case of circumcision (for ideally the Gunwinggu people, like others in western Arnhem Land, were non-circumcising). Moreover, it demonstrates an interesting feature of the contact between Aboriginal groups of differing cultures, and the flexibility of one such culture as a recipient of an alien idea. It reflects the non-static nature of Aboriginal society, and the way in which foreign ideas can be accepted or rejected according to individual and group response. This is an aspect which has received comparatively little study in Aboriginal Australia. It illustrates, too, how a rite which flourishes in one region as sacred and ritualistic may become secularized in transmission to another culture, although it may not be practised there. Thus the esoteric meaning of the rite can become exoteric, and (in this case) being regarded by the Gunwinggu as an exotic manifestation becomes charged with erotic potentialities.

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FOOTNOTES

1. R. and C. Berndt, Preliminary Report of Field Work in the Ooldea Region, Western South Australia, *Oceania Bound Reprint*, 1945, pp. 102-3 (also *Oceania*, Vol. XIII, No. 3, pp. 268-69).
2. H. Basedow, Subincision and Kindred Rites of the Australian Aboriginal, *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, Vol. LVII, 1927, pp. 144-5.
3. G. Róheim, Women and their Life in Central Australia, *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, Vol. LIII, 1933, pp. 230-4; M. F. Ashley Montagu, The Origin of Subincision in Australia, *Oceania*, Vol. VIII, No. 2, pp. 193-207, and *Coming Into Being Among the Australian Aborigines*, 1937, pp. 299-306.
4. M. F. Ashley Montagu, *op. cit.*, *Oceania*, Vol. VIII, No. 2, p. 204, and *Coming into Being* . . . p. 302.
5. 1945, Chapter VIII, pp. 162, 165.

6. Vide G. Róheim, *The Symbolism of Subincision, American Imago*, Vol. 6, No. 4, p. 3.
7. R. and C. Berndt, *op. cit.*, Appendix I; *Oceania*, Vol. XV, No. 3, pp. 239-266, particularly pp. 260-266 referring to Central Australia and the central-western part of the Northern Territory.
8. G. Róheim, *op. cit.*, *American Imago*, p. 3 (pp. 3-10).
9. R. and C. Berndt, *The Eternal Ones of the Dream* (review of Dr. G. Róheim's book of that title), *Oceania*, Vol. XVII, No. I, pp. 67-78, plates; reference to subincision on pp 76-77
 It was not my intention to misunderstand Dr. Róheim in this respect (vide G. Róheim, *op. cit.*, *American Imago*, p. 9 footnote 10). While aware that Dr. Róheim was making a simple statement of fact on the basis of his own field work in Central Australia, I was not at the time prepared to accept an assumption that such was the case also in other areas with which Dr. Róheim was not personally acquainted.
10. *op. cit.*, p. 76.
11. R. Berndt, *Kunapiipi*, in the press; F. W. Cheshire, Melbourne.
12. R. Berndt, *op. cit.*, Chapter II.
13. Although this is a non-subincising area, relevant songs and mythology have come up from the south, and have been retained in the Kunapiipi Song Cycle (vide. R. Berndt, *op. cit.* Chapter VII, Song 57.)
14. The Wauwalak are particularly associated with menstrual and afterbirth blood.
15. There were no subincised men at Oenpelli during our recent period of field work, 1949-50; but in 1947 a few subincised Rembarnga from the south-east and south were present.
16. This wooden subincised penis (ball, incisure), with *garulg* (urethra), is now in the collection of the Department of Anthropology, Sydney University. Obtained at Oenpelli, September 1947 from Ngalinmag, a Dangbun-Gunwinggu man.
17. This has been mentioned in R. and C. Berndt, *Sexual Behaviour in Western Arnhem Land*, Viking Fund Series of Publications in Anthropology, N.Y., in the press.
18. For example, H. Basedow, *op. cit.*, p. 155 mentions: "In a state of erection, the mutilated organ becomes very wide; it is only natural that after the lower connecting wall of the urethral canal has been severed, the *corpus penis* in this condition spreads itself laterally . . . through this lateral distension, the receiving vagina will gape more than it would under normal conditions, and so there is greater facility for the fluid to enter."
19. While the subincised penis emblem illustrated here shows in precise detail the incisure and urethra.



Mythology of Arnhem Land

by

Dr. Géza Róheim

AN extremely interesting book has been published lately by Professor A. P. Elkin and Catherine and Ronald Berndt.¹ Notwithstanding the fact that further publications by these authors are to be expected in the near future, the data contained in this book are such that I find it impossible to resist the temptation to interpret them.

There are three important mythological cycles in Arnhem Land. The first is the Djanggewul myth. It relates to the wanderings of two men and two women who in the "Dreaming time" (i.e., the mythological past) journeyed from the Island of the Dead to North East Arnhem Land. The leader's name was Djanggewul. There were two sisters, an older and a younger one, and a subordinate companion. They brought with them in their canoe a conical shaped mat called *ngainmara* and life-giving sticks, *rangga* objects, that represented the iguana's² tail. The mat symbolized the womb while the sticks were the penis and were hidden in the mat when not being used in ritual. However, some of the *rangga* were considered not iguana tails but trees. The iguana tail *ranggas* were used in the increase of the natural species, while the others were placed upright in the ground and grew into trees.

Djanggewul had an especially sacred *rangga* which he pushed in to the earth at intervals. As it was withdrawn water gushed forth from waterholes or wells and thus these wells and waterholes were created. From time to time Djanggewul assisted his sisters with the actual births of children of both sexes. These became the ancestors of the present natives. The continuous pregnancy of the two sisters is a dominant feature in the songs of the cycle. The people removed or born from their wombs are the *rangga*, the ancestors of the present natives. People's bones are likened

to these *rangga*, inherited from both parents through generations of ancestors back to these primeval *rangga*.

At the beginning, the Djanggewul sisters were the sole custodians of the religious objects. One day while the women were out collecting mussels the men stole the sacred objects, took them to their own camp and held the sacred "dancing" connected with them. On their return the Djanggewul sisters missed their *rangga*, but when they heard the men singing in the distance they decided that it was good that the men had taken their *rangga*, the men could carry out the ritual for them and would save them a lot of trouble. The men would carry out the ritual while they concerned themselves with childbearing and food collecting.

In the Djanggewul ritual, the hut used on the sacred grounds is also a womb in which the *rangga* are stored and from which the men emerge at the end of the ritual.

The leading myth of the other moiety of the tribe is quite different.

"When his father died, Banaitja desired to expand and put into practice some of Laintjung's religious concepts; but his endeavours were met with general disapproval, and at last he was killed by disbelieving people. Eventually, however, after his death, the people to whom Laintjung had given the sacred designs and *rangga* regretted their action, and made a 'likeness' of Banaitja in paperbark, bound together on a framework of cane. This object, used to beat rhythmically on the ceremonial ground, is now an important element in the *jiritja* [name of the moiety] ritual in general."³

The third important myth is that of the Wauwelak sisters. The elder one gave birth to a child after incest with a member of her own clan. She continued her journey while the afterbirth was still flowing after her. A large female python, Julunggul, smelled the blood and came out, made lightning and rain. The rain washed some of the afterbirth blood into the sacred pool, Muruwul, where the sisters had made their camp. The snake gradually came nearer the hut where the sisters sat with the child. They saw the progress

made by the snake and the elder sister started to dance in order to stop it. But the blood attracted the snake so she sent her younger sister out to dance. However, the female snake pushed its head in through the door and swallowed the three inmates. The python then returned to her well and, standing upright, talked to the other pythons. The rains began with the northwest monsoon and soon the country was flooded. Eventually, the two sisters were vomited out by the snake, came to life and live at the sacred well in their spirit form even today.

In another ceremony a large hollow wooden log which serves as a drum symbolizes the python or the womb of the elder Wauwelak sister.⁴

In attempting to analyze these myths, we begin with the Djanggewul myth. The first thing that strikes the eye is the meaning of the forked sticks or totemic emblems.

"The object symbolizes esoterically the tail of the *djanda* goanna who first saw the Djanggewul landing at Port Bradshaw; esoterically it is the male Djanggewul's genital organ. The top of the pole is carved with ridges which are the 'shoulders' of the goanna's front legs. Towards its tapering end, the pole is ridged and flattened at each side to signify the goanna's backbone. Djanggewul stuck the point of the pole into the ground as he walked along."⁵

The identification of the hard part of the body, i.e., people's bones, with the totemic emblems and the ancestral penis is interesting because of its implications for the *delayed* type of burial in which all that is left of the man is his bones.

The mythical ancestors came from Badu Island and the dead are supposed to return to the island. The corpse is painted with the sacred design of its totemic group and exposed on a platform. Then it is interred and afterwards disinterred. Finally, the bones are brought into the camp and placed in a stringy bark receptacle which is painted on the outside with the clan emblem of the deceased.⁶

Possibly the return (i.e., into the womb) is facilitated if the deceased is completely identified with his penis.

The lizard-phallos symbolism is frequent and I have quoted other examples collected by the Berndts in the Ooldea region.⁷

Who is Djanggewul? He is identical with Malpunga, the phallic hero of the Western Aranda and neighboring Luritja-speaking tribes.⁸

In the Pitjantara songs the penis of Malpunga or those of other Wildeat totem fathers are frequently compared to or symbolized by *tnatandja*. In the myth that belongs to the Wildeat ceremony of Ulupukula the *tnatandja* are the poles encased in bird's down and human hair that are used in the ritual. "Bird's down, big one far ahead," they sing, but by bird's down they mean the ceremonial pole, and by ceremonial pole they really mean the father's penis. A few lines later "yam stick" is used as an esoteric expression for father's penis. *Tnatandja* is used for penis in another song, but it really means that the penis is a pole with which they stroke a gap in the rocks when they want to pass through. In other versions Malpunga's penis is his *tjurunga*. Then again, he makes a very big cave by inserting his penis pole into a rock. (From field notes.)

Going back to the Arnhem Land myth of Djanggewul, we can certainly conjecture that he not only assisted his sisters with the delivery of their many children but was also the father of these children or *ranggas*. However the *ranggas* seem to have been sometimes born by forcible removal from the womb. And the *rangga* is a penis symbol (penis equals child). The *ranggas* as totemic emblems would therefore mean *father's penis taken out of mother*.

I have interpreted the frequent totemic formula: "the women had it before the men took it from them" as symbolizing the transition from the nipple to the penis (following the theory of Bergler and Eidelberg⁹). It may, however, also mean, "the women had it before (father's penis), now we have taken it from them (separated the parents, castrated the father, and we have his penis)."

The myth of Laintjung and Banaitja is explained if we

condense the two heroes. The father tried to establish certain laws (probably with regard to incest), the people killed him but then out of remorse made his likeness which is still used in the ritual.

The third myth, that of the Wauwelak sisters, we find in another version collected by Lloyd Warner. One of the two sisters was pregnant and the other had a child. They wandered and had intercourse with other supernatural beings till they came to a waterhole that belonged to the rock python. They started cooking for themselves and the child, but as they cooked each animal it jumped out of the fire alive and into the rockhole. They all dived into the clan's totemic well and disappeared. One of the women was menstruating and her blood fell into the waterhole where Yurlunggur, the Big Father, lives. He smelled the blood and raised himself from the well to swallow the women. As he stood there erect and looked at the women, the clouds grew larger and larger, the water rose and flooded the earth, and the rain poured down. The two women took shelter in their hut and *went to sleep*. The rain kept pouring down and awoke them. They sang to keep the rain from falling down and the snake from swallowing them. They were swallowed by the snake and the earth was covered by a flood. *When he swallowed them they suddenly fell into a deep sleep by his might*. He erected himself higher and higher talking to the other snakes. Finally, the flood subsided and he regurgitated those he had swallowed.¹⁰

I am now compelled to present — without the evidence — the results of a book I am writing on dreams and myths. I have found that many myths are based on dreams actually dreamed and retold. This dream origin becomes very probable if somebody — one of the *dramatis personae* — is asleep while the action continues. Moreover, the hypnagogic phantasy continues in the dream and the hypnagogic phantasy is usually one of falling into a cave, lake, and so forth, i.e., going back into the womb. This is represented in the Wauwelak mythology by *being swallowed by the female serpent*. It

would follow then that the dream-work uses the technique of representation by the opposite, i.e., it is a male being who is being swallowed or enters the inside of a woman.

One of the Murngin had the following dream: "I dreamed that a boy child came into my house. 'Father! Father!' he said. 'Where is mother?' "

"Next day I told my wife, and I thought, this must be true. Yesterday I went fishing with my wife at the creek. A bream fish came and took her hook. Then he shook the line and went back into the deep water. My wife said the same thing happened with her mother when her little brother was born. She said, 'I won't menstruate any longer because that baby fish is inside me.' "

"In the initiation ritual we are told that when the boys lie there and the men pull the bushes off them that means that the snake is spitting them up. They are spirits now." (This refers to the first time the python swallowed the women.)¹²

The dream that underlies this myth would be the dream of a male developing from the hypnagogic phantasy; falling asleep means entering the maternal womb or (and) coitus with the mother. Rank has shown that dreams of a vesical nature are transformed by the unconscious as intrauterine or birth or coitus dreams.¹³

In psychoanalytic practice I have found that just before or during menstruation women frequently react to the menstrual flow with the urethral type of dream. My assumption therefore would be that we have a combination of two dreams or *dream myths*, one male and one female, as the basic stuff the Wauwelak story is made of. In making this statement I am aware of both the etiological and the ritualistic elements in the myth but I regard these as secondary.

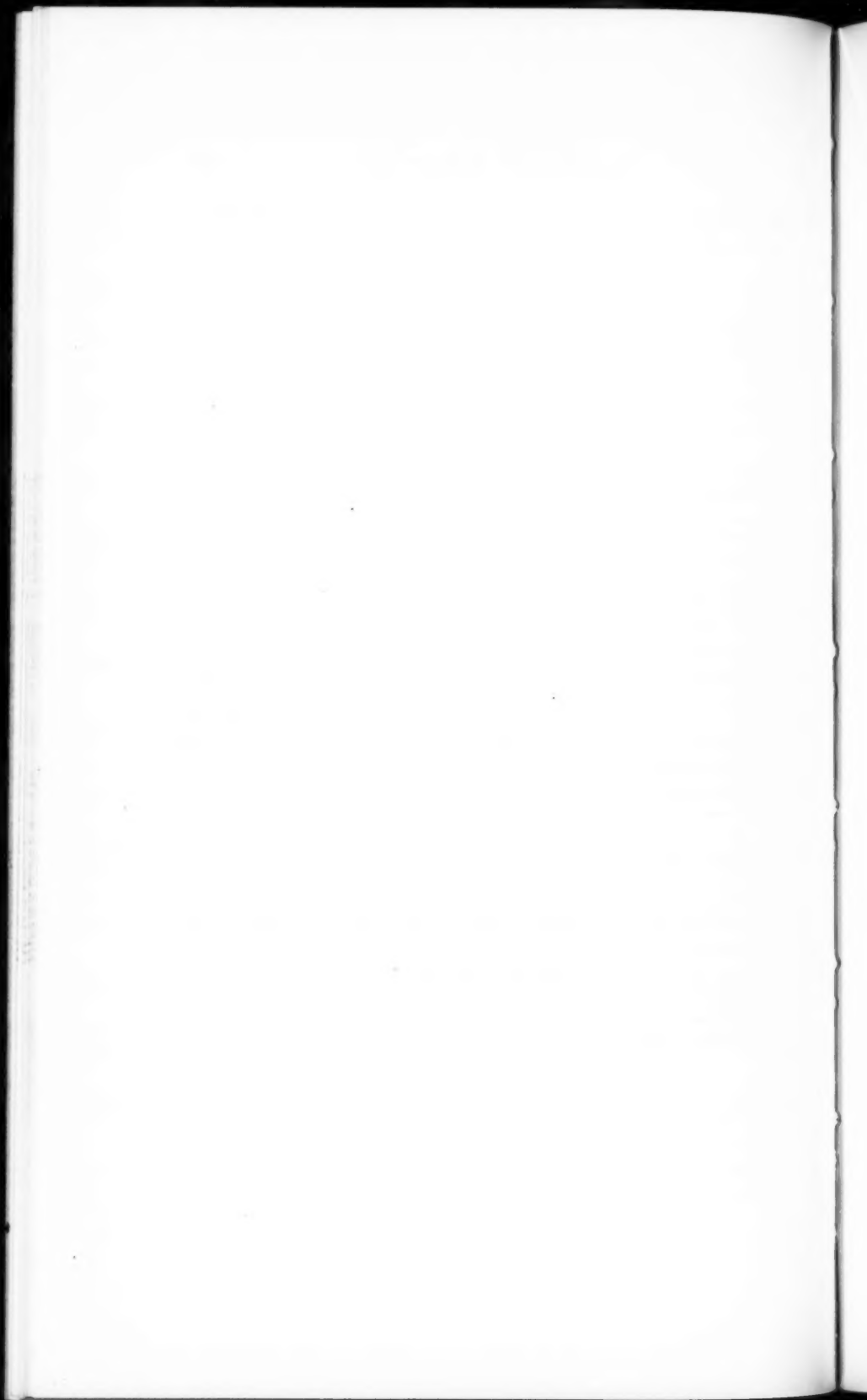
Attempting to summarize the entire situation, we find that two of these myths reflect the unconscious conflicts incidental to our whole life. In the first, the sons triumphantly parade father's penis now torn out of mother. In the second, remorse sets in after the death of the father. The third

myth, however, is different; it is based on the inner pressure of re-telling or acting out one's dreams.

1 W 85 St.
N.Y.C.

FOOTNOTES:

1. **Art in Arnhem Land.** Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1950.
2. A large lizard.
3. Elkin, Berndt and Berndt, *op. cit.*, p. 31.
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 28-33.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 34, 35.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 94.
7. Róheim, **The Eternal Ones of the Dream.** New York: International Universities Press, 1945. Pp. 206, 262. R. and C. Berndt, "A Preliminary Report of Field Work in the Ooldea Region," *Oceania*, XIII (1943), p. 259; XIV, p. 140.
8. For previous references, cf Róheim, **The Riddle of the Sphinx.** London, 1934), **The Eternal Ones of the Dream, Psychoanalysis and Anthropology** (New York, 1950), indices.
9. E. Bergler and L. Eidelberg, "Der Mamma Complex des Mannes," *International Zeitschrift für Psychoanalyse*, XIX (1933).
10. W. Lloyd Warner, **A Black Civilization.** New York: Harper and Bros., 1937. Pp. 254-257.
11. *Ibid.*, pp. 21, 22. I have abbreviated the account.
12. *Ibid.*, pp. 281.
13. O. Rank, **Psychoanalytische Beiträge zur Mythenforschung.** Vienna: Internationale Psychoanalytische Bibliothek, 1919. Chapter VII. Cf. also his paper in **Jahrbuche für psychoanalytische und psychopathologische Forschungen**, IV (1912), p. 51. Further data to substantiate this point of view will appear in my forthcoming book.
14. Floods, monsoons, etc.



Literary Critics who Can Spell But Not Read

*Contributions to the occupational hazard of reviewers —
“Emotional Reading Block.”*

by

EDMUND BERGLER, M.D.

*One of the commonest but most
uncritical faults of criticism — the
refusal to consider what it is that
the author intended to give us.*

George Saintsbury, Preface to
Fielding's TOM JONES

LITERARY criticism has been attacked by practically every writer of importance through the ages — and is still alive. The reason is not difficult to detect: the average reader believes himself in need of a guide; the possibility, often expressed, that the guide may be worthless is dismissed as “silly grievances of dissatisfied writers.” Thus, writers have protested in vain against critics’ abuses, misjudgments, and resort to personal attacks. To quote a few of the protests, over a wide range of time and culture:

Zeuxis (circa 400 B.C., as quoted by Pliny in NATURAL HISTORY):

“Criticism comes easier than craftsmanship.” Changed, about 2300 years later, by G. B. Shaw into “Those who can, do; those who can’t — teach.” (He should have said, “teach writing.”)

Francis Bacon: “Sir Henry Wotton used to say that critics are like brushers of noblemen’s clothes.”

Lawrence Sterne: “Of all the cants which are canted in this canting world — though the cant of hypocrites may be the worst — the cant of criticism is the most tormenting.”

Shelley: “Reviewers, with some rare exceptions, are a most stupid and malignant race. As a bankrupt thief turns thief-taker in despair, so an unsuccessful author turns critic.”

Coleridge: “Reviewers are usually people who would have been poets, historians, biographers, etc., if they could: they have tried their talents at one or the other, and have failed; therefore they turn critics.”

Charles Churchill: "Who shall dispute what the Reviewers say?
 Their word's sufficient; and to ask a reason,
 In such a state as theirs, is downright treason."

Disraeli: "It is much easier to be critical than to be correct."

Elizabeth Barrett Browning:

"Good critics who have stamped out poet's hope,
 Good statesmen, who pulled ruin on a state,
 Good patriots who for a theory risked a cause."

Hawthorne: "You know who critics are? — the men who have
 failed in literature and art."

Henry Austin Dobson:

"Dear Critics, whose verdicts are always so new!
 One word in your ear. There were Critics before . .
 And the man who plants cabbages imitates, too!"

Samuel Butler:

"O Critics, Cultured Critics!
 Who will praise me after I am dead,
 Who will see in me both more and less than I intended,
 But who will swear that whatever it was it was all perfectly
 right;
 You will think you are better than the people who, when I was
 alive, swore that whatever I did was wrong,
 And damned my books for me as fast as I could write them;
 But you will not be better, you will be just the same, neither
 better nor worse,
 And you will go for some future Butler as your fathers have
 gone for me;
 Oh, how I should have hated you!"

William Wetmore Story: "Mosquito critics with a poisonous sting."

Oliver Wendell Holmes: "What blessed thing is that nature, when
 she invented, manufactured and patented her authors, contrived
 to make critics out of the chips that were left."

H. M. Tomlinson: "Bad and indifferent criticism of books is just
 as serious as a city's careless drainage."

Andrew Lang: "The dusty and stony ways of contemporary criticism."

The list of disparaging remarks is far from complete. The main theme, paralleled in modern terms, is this: why should a man who has repeatedly failed to pass the examinations for a driver's license be automatically considered eligible for the job of examiner?

Obviously, not all critics are of this type; unfortunately, the majority are. In short, since critics are in general in-

hibited and frustrated writers, and consequently neurotics, they react with neurotic envy to the real talent of creative writers. On the basis of clinical cases, I summarized the situation thus in my recent book, *THE WRITER AND PSYCHO-ANALYSIS*¹:

"The contemporary critic is usually an inhibited writer filled unconsciously with undigested anger against the less inhibited of his confreres in the writing profession. It is no secret that the less productive the critic is as a writer the more devastating are his reviews. What is less well understood is that his unproductivity as a writer also results in a predilection for mediocrity, because mediocrity is, unconsciously, more easily forgiven by the sterile than is genuine talent. . . . To clarify the record, let me remind the too excitable that I plead not that psychiatrists should become literary critics, but that writers would be better critics were they to learn something about psychiatry. . . . No one wants to take from the critics their esthetic, metric, linguistic, or dramaturgic standards, even though they themselves cannot even agree as to what these standards should be. No one wants to deprive them of their hard-won job. No one denies — at least theoretically — the necessity for critics. What we respectfully ask of them is that they acknowledge that the medical-psychologic science of human actions and reactions has amassed a great deal of material which has to be learned. Unfortunately, everyone considers himself a specialist in medical psychology. Asked whether he would speak in the same positive and pragmatic way about, let us say, Xray, he would reply: "Of course not. I never studied it." The situation is reminiscent of the gentleman in a novel of Dickens who, asked whether he could play the violin, answered that he hadn't tried it yet but was sure that if he did he would be able to play. . . . The critic of the future may well have a dual training — psychiatric and formal-esthetic. This psychiatric training will teach him the ABCs of understanding unconscious reactions; his training in problems of esthetic form the standards for the formal-literary judgment of the presentation of the contents of the unconscious. Not until then can the critic be more than an amateur, ignorant in psychology, whose naivete is equaled only by his air of omniscience. That self-glorifying pseudo-omnipotence leads frequently to critical statements in reviews that specific fictional characters are "incredible." Incredible, that is, according to the critic's conscious yardsticks and unconscious prejudices."

1. Doubleday, New York, 1950

The question arises: why is the critic necessary? The answer is simple: he is a *timesaver*, *provided he does his job properly*. In this country alone, approximately 11,000 books of all sorts are published every year. The critic's job is to give an informative, short precis, and (if he wishes) his own — as far as humanly possible — unprejudiced opinion, to *help the reader to make up his mind* whether or not he wishes to read the book. It is *not* the critic's business to make up the reader's mind.

This is the proper function of the literary critic. He has, however, other — rather regrettable — uses for the superficial set: the members of this wide-spread group rarely read books, but habitually pretend to, hence they can fake being well-informed by parroting critics' opinions. Of course nobody can blame the critics for this. The New York Times had this to say, as front-page news, on July 18, 1950:

STUDY INDICATES HALF
OF U.S. SHUNS BOOKS

By the Associated Press

ANN ARBOR, Mich., July 17 —

Nearly half of all Americans do not read books, A University of Michigan survey indicated today.

More than half of all adults live within a mile of a public library, but one one-tenth average as much as a visit a month, the survey showed.

Nobody assumes that people who shun libraries and bookstores, and frequent, if at all, newsstands filled with popular magazines, stop talking authoritatively about — books.

The real impediment to good criticism is the human element: criticism is in the hands of critics. Even the best critic is a human being with all of humanity's imperfections; and good critics are rare. The good critic is a person who

either gave up, without inner grievances, his writing aspirations as unachievable, and now devotes his inner energies to identification with, and help to, the struggling creative writer; or he is himself a successful creative writer who, because of his own success, is more or less above petty jealousies. Neither type of good critic is frequently encountered.

What is frequently seen is the neurotic critic whom power corrupts, and the critic does possess power. Moreover, personal prejudices creep in, malice and envy are difficult to exclude. Thus, the *combination of neurotic inhibition of creativity plus corruption through power, plus conscious or unconscious prejudices, plus malice*, provide the four corners of the modified Pythian chair on which the typical critic rests. Regrettable, but true.

* * * *

Objectivity, so difficult to achieve even in favorable cases (meaning: in a not too neurotically diseased ego; what is popularly called a "correct" persons), becomes more or less extinct when an emotional problem in a book confronts critics. Then, something peculiar, though banal, happens: the emotional impact proves stronger than correct or even logical thinking. Psychiatrically, this is nothing to marvel at; the priority of affects and the slight patina of logic in emotional situations is one of the basic psychiatric tenets.

Recently I had a series of experiences with critics who were confronted with an emotional problem in the form of my book on the unconscious determinants in writing. The whole idea of "psychiatric interference" in the emotional domain of artistic creativity, plus the book's blunt statements about critics, were, of course, sacrilege. Science is, however, not a preserver of time-bound and time-honored illusions, and every scientist who comes up with facts contradicting these illusions is as a matter of routine prepared to "face the music" of the conventional critics — music which, as expected, proves rather a cacophony. No complaints, consequently, are being filed, nor is there more than the

unavoidable minimum of ironically tinged resentment on my part, since experience with eight previous books had already taught me, "know your critics." I believe, however, that the personal experience should be utilized to prove something "unbelievable": that critics confronted with an emotional problem proved *incapable of reading with understanding*. Nobody expects literary critics to understand psychiatric clinical experiences; but the loss of the ability to read, though the faculty of spelling remained intact, is worth recording. Moreover, an emotionally charge incident, supplied by critics, gives clues to the general attitude of criticism, and even to specific subdivisions of typical reviews.

For the understanding of the following, a summary of the ideas of the book in question is necessary. In this book, the creative writer is considered a *defendant* before the tribunal of his inner conscience; to disprove the accusation, an unconscious *alibi* is created, forming the idea of the work. This alibi does not correspond to the artist's unconscious wishes, and is but a *defense* against these repressed wishes. The unconscious material is later worked out consciously; here, too, an unconscious defense enters: imagination (genetically, aborigines of infantile voyeurism) is changed into exhibitionism: by writing down and elaborating on the "plot," the creative writer exhibits before the prospective reader. — The basic conflict of the creative writer has found in clinical analyses of 36 writers to be an unsolved oral-masochistic attachment to the image of the pre-Oedipal mother. — Finally, on the basis of clinical material, the therapeutic solution was expounded; "writer's block" can be removed by psychiatric-psychoanalytic treatment; most of the conclusions of the book are therapeutic-clinical.

Let us see what the reviewers did with these clinical statements. It should be stressed, however, that the favorable or unfavorable character of the review was not used as a gauge in determining its type. There were approximately 200 reviews, a good portion of which were not at all directly inimical, and were frequently even laudatory. The examples

following are but samples; every example could be multiplied from other reviews.

1. *The "Common-Sense" Review*

Common sense is a valuable asset when applied where it belongs, to the workings of the conscious part of the personality. Applied to the unconscious, where a completely different denomination is used — namely, unconscious wishes, defenses, guilt — peculiar misunderstandings arise.

Walter Winchell, the king of the columnists, had this to say in his syndicated column of March 4, 1950 (reprinted by 100-200 papers.) Headed, "The Intelligentsia," it ran:

"Psychiatrist E. Bergler's 'The Writer and Psychoanalysis' offers this diagnosis: 'The writer writes to furnish inner alibis to his tormenting inner conscience.' Like psychiatrists, Mr. Bergler, most writers write to pay the rent."

Which simplification disposes nicely of the unconscious; the best way to make a writer sterile is obviously to bequeath him a house. The landlord-theory of writing does not explain why even wealthy writers continue to embarrass their early followers by poor writing.

Winchell's landlord-theory of writing is paralleled by the "plumber theory" created by the satirist O'Reilly (New York Telegraph, 2/23/50):

"Obviously, what (the author) is describing as 'writer's block' is nothing more than the curious absent-mindedness with which plumbers are commonly afflicted, causing them to forget their tools. Yet nobody ever psychoanalyses a plumber. When the bathroom engineer forgets his tools the entire matter is considered quite normal, and people calmly sit down with their feet pulled up on the chair, until he goes back to the shop and gets them. When a writer, confronted by a typewriter, discovers that he has forgotten to get a story, people act in utterly different fashion. Instead of calmly putting up their feet to let the bilge flow, they go rushing around yelling for a psychoanalyst."

To be sure to kill off the unconscious reasons for writing block, O'Reilly, obviously not too convinced of the efficacy of the plumber-theory, presents (like the proverbial pessimist

who wears belt and suspenders) a supplementary theory as well. This one is taken from the bar, a safe place for alcoholic writers:

"The good gray Doctor says he got the material for this book interviewing 36 writers suffering from something called 'writer's block,' although in my set this ailment generally was known as 'hangover' induced by an unconscious urge to be first over the bars with Fox-chaser's rye."

The "hangover theory" has the drawback of not clarifying what came first: writer's block, then drinking, or drinking, and writer's block, not to forget the painful fact that both have unconscious causes. In any case, this is the situation as a reporter sees it — even an analysis of 1-2 years duration is called by O'Reilly "interviewing."

2. *The Review of Honest Misunderstanding*

Psychiatry is a complicated science, and — to complicate it still further — a very new one. Hence, the psychiatric ABC is not easily mastered, even by people with good will to learn. Especially the fact that *intellectual* knowledge, acquired by self-help books, and the *affective* working-through in psychiatric-psychoanalytic treatment, are not identical, is difficult to hammer into the heads — of critics. Thus, the following rather friendly utterance is explainable:

"Dr. Bergler has given his book, 'The Writer and Psychoanalysis,' the title for which writers have waited. Someday surely an analyst would turn his scientific light upon the problems peculiar to those craftsmen and artists who, dealing most directly with the turbulence, the conflicts, the dark undercurrents of human life, seem to find themselves most often swept off their creative balance. Dr. Bergler has dealt with writers, he knows what causes that blank state known as writer's block, he suggests that he knows the way out. (Follow contents) Is his only help that couch in the psychoanalyst's office? In either case, he (the writer) will not leap for his typewriter in a fresh surge of the creative impulse. Dr. Bergler has no doubt helped the writers who have been his patients back to their work. He hasn't done it with his book."

Helen Hull, president of the Author's Guild of the
Author's League, *Publishers' Weekly*, 4/22/50

No, reading a book will not make the inhibited writer "leap for his typewriter." Psychiatric self-help books which cure exist only in the fantasy of naive publishers.

3. *The Review of Distorting Misunderstanding*

The technique of this type of review is that of a lawyer trying to undermine the reliability of a dangerous witness for the opposition: everything goes. In a review by Gorham Munson in the *Saturday Review of Literature* (8/12/50), this technique is applied: first narcissism and conceit are charged ("Bergler has rushed in where Freud feared to tread"), then a squabble concerning a passage from Poe follows, with the purpose of showing that the author "leaps uncritically to interpretations and conclusions," and then, as another argument on this same point, discussion of a statistical estimate of the number of writers, taken from *The New York Times* and quoted in the book. Since the author believed the *New York Times*, the conclusion is obvious, to Munson: "Bergler swallowed a guestimate," hence is unreliable. This convincing argument is topped by a rather peculiar (the word "peculiar" being a euphemism) misreading:

"Consequently, it is not surprising to find him admitting, while analyzing a trick story by Jellinek, that 'we need not fear to maintain a fact that is contrasting with the author's own demonstration,' which means, to judge by Bergler's example, we need not fear to put into a story something the author didn't. The author has made a 'psychological error,' that's all. Naturally, with this lack of humility before the facts of a story, Bergler can always find just what he seeks to confirm his theory. What he reports that he sees sometimes makes you bug-eyed, but — is it science?"

This is an especially brazen example of distorting misreading, or inability to read. The passage referred to says exactly the opposite: the "psychological error" gives the clue to the understanding, hence is *not* a psychological error. This is pointed out in not less than three places:

"In dealing with great, real poets, that is, those who intuitively know a great deal about the unconscious, one has to be especially skeptical in pointing out 'psychological errors.' The latter usually conceal a defense mechanism against a repressed wish." (page 154, footnote 8)

"As usual with 'errors' of great writers — and Jellinek is one — it represents an unconscious clue rather than a mistake." (page 251)

"Thus an apparent psychological error becomes the clue to the understanding of the story." (p. 154)

And as to the reviewer's hypocritical excitement over the statement, "We need not fear to maintain a fact that is contrasting with the author's own demonstration," it is first incorrectly taken out of context:

"If our principle statement, for the sake of which this book is written, is correct — namely, that every work of art corresponds to a defense mechanism against an unconscious wish — we need not fear to maintain a fact that is contrasting with the author's own demonstration. Grotesque and over-assuming as it may seem, by means of our psychological knowledge we know more than the fiction writer himself about his work." (p. 151)

Every interpretation of an unconscious mechanism contrasts sharply with the conscious rationalization of the subject. That is what the science of the unconscious means — to make the subject see what he is not aware of. Munson's objection is on the naive level of an analysis confronted with the first analytical interpretation.

But Munson obviously denies the existence of the unconscious, hence harps clumsily on details which he distorts, without having the courage to come out with the real objection. He acts, as previously stated, like a lawyer in court, defending a "hopeless case:" unable to refute the facts, he swears the damaging witnesses who report them.

It is also superfluous to state that Munson's review does not report the contents of the book; more than that, it distorts the contents. "Dr. B. conceives of writing as self-expression (self-manifestation)." That's all. Not a word about the writer's inner conflict with conscience, therapeutic results, etc. In short, smearing the "witness" is the man's theme and effort.

4. *The Incompetent Reviewer*

The incompetent reviewer is a rather pitiful figure; he reminds one of a little boy faced with a problem in higher mathematics while he is still struggling with the multiplication table. He knows he is not going to cut an ideal figure, and so in desperation tries to be smart about it all, which gets him into deeper and deeper water.

To exemplify: One P. Goodman (COMPLEX 1:2, 1950) finds an error in logic when conclusions are drawn from analytic removal of voyeuristic or exhibitionistic difficulties in writer's block to underlying reasons of productivity: "But this is tantamount to saying, is it not, that removing a cinder under the eyelid, that blocks seeing, proves that it is with the eyelid that one sees." The naivete of the reviewer overlooks the fact that the cinder came from the *outside*, the block in writers from the *inside*. Some "error in logic"! This reviewer's other objections are on a level of logorrhoic confusion which does not warrant serious refutation.

Another incompetent critic, one Harold Rosenberg (in COMMENTARY, Sept. 1950), after excelling in vituperation brings up his prize argument: the book uses the "amazing procedure of describing the writer in terms of the man who can't write." The reviewer is obviously uninformed of the elementary fact in medicine that the study of psychopathology has greatly advanced our knowledge of "normal" psychodynamics. This naivete and ignorance makes him, it is clear, competent to review a medical book!

5. *The Ignorant - Benevolent - Teasing Review*

A series of reviewers misunderstood (by misreading) the basic trend of the book: the writer, as long as he is productive, has found his individual solution to his tormenting conflict. Writing is a self-curative and productive alibi "sickness." Confusing the inner difficulties facing the writer, and the resulting productivity, some reviewers mused:

"Abnormals, move over and make room on the end of the bench for Dr. Bergler. He writes, too." (Washington Post, 2/26/50)

"Come, come, Doctor, what about yourself?" (*Patriot*, Harrisburg, Pa., 2/19/50)

"Bergler's book and theories are both penetrating and interesting and it is doubtful whether anyone can read it without glimpsing many evident truths and excellent ideas. Yet Bergler stands convicted as a passive masochist himself. His insistence that his generalization always holds water must be taken at face value — and Bergler wrote a book!" (*Californian*, Bakersfield, Calif., 2/22/50)

The catch is the confusion between *creative* and *scientific* writing. They have nothing in common; on the contrary, they represent different entities. This is best proved by the fact that the strongest indictment against a fiction writer runs, "He has no *imagination*." The corresponding reproach against the scientific writer is, "He doesn't stick to *facts*."

6. *The Deliberately Malicious Review*

Bernard De Voto, who has a monthly feature, "The Easy Chair," in Harper's Magazine, devoted all its four pages in the May, 1950 issue to THE WRITER AND PSYCHOANALYSIS. As usual in his critical writings, De Voto's utterances correspond to William Wetmore Story's definition of certain critics, "Mosquito critics with a poisonous sting." The upshot of his misreading is that he calls for an umpire to decide whether the author's opinions on writers are the generally accepted opinions of analysis, although in numerous places in the book it is expressly stated that such a uniform opinion on the psychology of writing does not exist — yet. Hence, by playing naive, and intentionally omitting this precise statement, De Voto tries to cast doubt on the validity of the clinical findings reported.

In his malice, De Voto goes so far as to deny even his own findings on the lack of objectivity in writers, although — to refresh his memory — long passages from his own book, THE LITERARY FALLACY, are quoted in THE WRITER AND PSYCHOANALYSIS. Should De Voto have changed his opinions since 1944, it would have been his business to confess, instead of shifting the blame — on to the author of the book he criticizes.

De Voto misreads with gusto, and having done so, triumphantly clinches his fallacious argument. One of his trump cards is that the theory presented does not make allowances for differences in writers, but rather views them as automata. Here, he misreads what the text says in precise language:

"The difference in talent in writers can also be formulated: it corresponds to the amount of compromise the unconscious ego can wrest from the inner conscience. That amount can be analytically increased — at least in some cases." (p. 258, italics in the original)

On the same level of misreading are arguments against the fact that certain expressions in both poetic and everyday language point in the direction of an unconscious identification: words equals milk. Why adduce those, De Voto objects naively, and not others? "Why is 'eloquent blood spoke in her cheek' a live metaphor which reveals the poet's psychic drive, whereas 'sounding brass and tinkling cymbal' is dead, peripheral and unrevealing?" The answer is simple: poetic expressions were adduced, in the book, as tangential material, substantiating *clinical* findings. By omitting the clinical findings, De Voto "makes a case." His objection to the equation (words equals milk) goes so far that he even misquotes Coleridge's "Kubla Khan" —

"For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise."

De Voto substitutes "*wine* of Paradise" for "*milk* of Paradise," although once more to refresh his memory and test his reading ability, the poem was correctly quoted on p. 72.²

In his misreading, De Voto enters even the psychiatric scene, posing as expert: he does not see why the author has identified as his own contribution the fact that the writer expresses in his work *not* his unconscious wishes but only

2. I am indebted to Fred Schwed, Jr., well-known satirist and author of the bestseller "WHERE ARE THE CUSTOMERS' YACHTS?", for this observation.

inner defenses against these wishes. Here he misreads approximately a dozen pages in the book, which give in many quotations from Freud, Rank, Sachs, Reik, and others the clinical proof that exactly this difference of opinion as to what the writer expresses, is the crux of the matter. To satisfy De Voto's curiosity: the discussion whether a two- or three-layer structure appears in neurotic symptoms and personality structure in general (the latter opinion being promoted by the present writer), is still unsettled. Self-styled "experts" should read before they write.

Also on the basis of misreading, De Voto forges his strongest "argument":

"One thing that makes me skeptical of Dr. Edmund Bergler's *THE WRITER AND PSYCHOANALYSIS* (brought out by Doubleday) — is the sweeping and absolute finality of what he says. He keeps making unqualified statements about 'all writers,' 'every case,' 'every artist,' 'all artistic stimulus.' When he is uncovering a cause or announcing a finding he repeatedly says 'exclusively,' 'solely,' 'only,' 'entirely.' "

What are the sober facts, gratuitously over-read? In the foreword of *THE WRITER* (xiii) even De Voto could have read:

"I do not claim to have invented a patented method for automatically unlocking the psychology of every writer in this world without going into the *specificity* of the *specific* case. I simply claim that thirty-six experiences have enabled me to make specific deductions, and that therefore an *attempt* to establish a common denominator is more than worthy. Perhaps this book should not be written without starting every sentence with the modest restriction: 'It has been my experience with thirty-six writers,' or 'One could venture the guess on the basis of thirty-six analyzed writers.' "

One could continue to enumerate De Voto's over-readings (e.g., his reproductions of the psychic-masochistic substructure and the role of the superego are so ambiguous that one gets the impression that he did not understand what it is all about), but the above samples will do. It is superfluous to mention that De Voto does not record with even one word the criticism on critics contained in the book, although exactly

this criticism seems to have hit the professional critic De Voto somewhere below the literary belt, and is perhaps the reason for the exaggeration of his malice in this specific case. On the other hand, the overworked "red herring" claim that analysis is "mad at literature" is dragged out.

In short, malice and over-reading do not *always* pay, especially if the technique is *too* obvious.

7. *The Would-Be Witty Review*

This subdivision presupposes a temporarily emotionally perturbed critic, whose blood pressure was considerably raised by what he misread in a book; after cooling off he expresses his fury in a pseudo-joke. The prefix "pseudo" alludes to the fact that the joke thus produced is always a ricochet; it rebounds because of inner guilt or the irrationality of the initial fury:

"But the most hopeful fact to be derived from Dr. B's treatise is that mothers can now predetermine the future literary success of their children. The technique is so simple that any mother whose son does not develop into a truly great writer has only her ignorance to blame. This treatment should be administered early, preferably when the infant is just two or three months old. When he hollers for the breast or the bottle, just haul off and slap him. That's all there is to it — except, of course, that some time during his career he must learn how to read — and write."

William S. Milburn, *Arizona Quarterly*, Summer issue, 1950

Obviously the last prerequisite mentioned by the reviewer did not develop in himself: learning how to read. Otherwise, he would have found in the book on which he makes his ironical comment, long chapters on psychic masochism, which has a more complicated genesis than the formula, "slap him." Also, if all psychic masochists were writers, the reviewer would lose his job: all people would write and literary criticism would disappear from this good earth.

In any case, to make a fool of oneself is legally not a punishable offense; hence the reviewer can indulge with impunity in this luxury.

8. *The "Surprised" Review*

Confronting people with something new produces many different reactions. In general, fear and rejection predominate; sometimes the material is too overwhelming, and the reactions of surprise — and approval, come to the fore. Even in these cases, one never knows whether the approval is not based on half-misunderstandings (one can only hope that this isn't so); at any rate, this type of internal earthquake produces favorable reviews.

"Dr. Bergler deals with his clinical experience of 36 completely sterile writers, and the strange manifestation known as 'writer's block.' The author has an uncanny understanding of the writer, and since he has to his credit at least a dozen books as well as many papers there seems no doubt that he is well aware of the problem."

Cameron Dewar, *TRAVELER*, Boston, Mass., 4/5/1950
(After correctly relating the contents): "The artist knows what he is doing; he just doesn't know why. And when it happens that he can't 'do' and doesn't know why he can't — well, that's where Dr. Bergler comes in. . . No writer should be without Dr. Bergler's aid; most readers will profit from it."

Bob Sain, *NEWS*, Charlotte, N. C., 2/25/50

Sometimes, the elapsed time between the overwhelming "surprise" reaction while reading, and the later writing of the review, is sufficient to bring up objections which the reviewer himself considers "minor." After this self-reassurance, a favorable review appears. E.g., August Derleth in a long review entitled "Dr. Edmund Bergler's book impressive but has flaws" (*CAPITAL TIMES*, Madison, Wis., 3/4/50), writes:

"He (Dr. B.) sets forth cogent and sound ideas on the whole, but he comes up with some amusing bits. . . Despite these minor points — Dr. B.'s book contains enough ore to make it worth while mining. . ."

9. *The Contradictory Review*

The contradictory review, so typical for ambivalent reviewers, tells you that you are good and silly at the same time. The technique of reconciling both contradictions is simple:

the reviewer just doesn't read (or doesn't understand) what does not suit him:

"... His (Dr. B.'s) analyses are sound and his findings concerning these particular writers are probably true. I do think, however, that it is decidedly unscientific for the doctor to dogmatically state that this theory applies to all writers. . . ."

Ken Crossen, NEWS, Los Angeles, Cal., 4/15/50

The trouble is that the author specifically stated — even in the introduction—that he is talking only about the writers he analyzed (see p. 202). But an argument of the "on-the-one-hand, but on-the-other-hand" variety must be presented, and so the unsuitable text must be mis-read to fit.

This technique has been applied to the book dozens of times. Epithets such as "fascinating," "provocative," "novel," mingle with most naive objections, deserving the opposite. And although the incompetence of some reviewers is obvious even to themselves ("realizing that the layman is licked at the start of any psychiatric argument" — Josephine Lawrence in an ambiguous review, NEWS, Newark, N.J., 3/12/50), they just go on talking as psychiatric experts.

The term, "contradictory reviews," is sometimes, though inaccurately, applied to different reviews stating opposite positions. Sinclair Lewis had something to say about it in the introduction of JAYHAWKER:

"And I want strongly to announce as grimly as in the copyright notice in this book is announced that all television, submarine and trout-fishing rights are by us Strictly Reserved — that the next commentator who slyly tells me that 'plays are not written but re-written' will be transported to the hell which I have finally established for all autograph hunters, collectors of first editions who are willing to send return postage if I will inscribe their copies of my books, teachers who urge their pupils to write asking why I ever began to write — a question still unsolved by myself 3 — and ever began to write — a question still unsolved by myself — and the two foulest classes of book reviewers, i.e., they who begin their reviews, 'In these days when there is so much sentimental fiction

3. Author's note: an interesting and honest contribution to the psychology of writers!

designed for magazines, it is a relief to come upon this bold and realistic slice of life,' and they who mutter, 'In these days when there are so many so-called writers who smear their pages with the manure of defeatism of so-called "realism," it is a delight to come upon a tale so clean, tender and profound as this.'

The present writer wonders whether there is some room in the "finally established hell" announced by Lewis; he could name a few candidates.

To name a few contradictions, concentrating on the detail of the style:

"Dr. Bergler's findings are novel, and his conclusions may well produce a radical change in the present attitude to writers and their art. . . The author is to be congratulated on steering a difficult middle course so well. Too often books of this type can be classed under one or another of two general heads. Either they are too technical for the ordinary reader, or they are written in such a 'popular' or 'simplified' style that they are an insult to the reader's intelligence. Dr. B.'s book is technical enough to be accurate and simple enough to be understood by the ordinary reader interested in the subject. . ."

P.A.G. McKay, GAZETTE,
Montreal, Can., 3/11/50

"Dr. Bergler obviously believes that the (psychoanalytic) jargon he uses is English and his publishers have been too polite — or perhaps too weary — to argue the point. . . In spite of the fact . . . this volume is well worth perusal by the discriminating reader."

TOMORROW, July, 1950

"One has to sweat to make out Dr. Bergler's theory of why writers write. In the first place, it is couched in the thick jargon of psychoanalysis. . ."

SATURDAY REVIEW
OF LITERATURE, 8/12/50

In short, the author has to congratulate *and* condemn for his style, which is both excellent and lousy. He has successfully avoided the pitfall of overpopularization, and at the same time has made his reader sweat through a maze of scientific jargon. Take your choice.

10. *The "Killing" Review*

In his allegedly saner days, Ezra Pound once made a perceptive remark:

"It is only after long experience that most men are able to define a thing in terms of its own genus, painting as painting, writing as writing. You can spot the bad critic when he starts by discussing the poet and not the poem."

(A.B.C. OF READING, p. 71)

This correct observation pertains not merely to poems, but has general applicability.

A "killing" review works according to two principles: indignation and deep irony, taking not the book but the author as butt. An example, in the case of *THE WRITER AND PSYCHOANALYSIS*, is Sterling North's review in the *World Telegram & Sun* (2/17/50). The good man was so eager to hit that he published his review one week before the book's official publication date, something otherwise strictly repudiated in literary circles. Being in the difficult position of having to attack the author personally, without being familiar with his private life, he settled for attacking analysts in general. Instead of discussing the neuroticism of writers, topic of the book he was purportedly reviewing, he turned the tables, declaring that all analysts are in need of analysis. He calls description of the unconscious reasons for writers' neuroticism a "smear." And having done so, he plunges head-on into a philosophical discussion of writers, on his own level, forgetting that there is still the book which he hasn't reviewed. . .

"But writers — and there are some — who live particularly rewarding lives, and rear and educate bright and happy children; enjoy nature, the arts, swimming, fishing and reading, and write because it is fun to write. . . Certainly among the ivory tower cultists who worship at the shrine of Kafka, Joyce and other literary eccentrics there are many neurotics. But fortunately they are still a small minority of the men who are making their lives writing."

This, mind you, is not a propaganda prospectus for happy writers, but "the restrained preamble to a restrained Bronx cheer" for the book, as North modestly (but verbatim) calls his non-review. He follows up, though, with an "opinion": "It's getting to the point where a fair question would

be: 'Can you think straight, or were you educated in Vienna?' "

An anonymous reviewer in *TIME* Magazine did better (3/6/50), dispensing with the cruder method of North's indignant Bronx cheer, and concentrating on high-class irony. His trouble was that he had entered into hopeless competition with the *NEW YORKER* Magazine, which slightly cramped his style, and lost his battle. Here is what he has to say:

"YOU TOO CAN WRITE. In this formidable treatise, Analyst Bergler wrestles with the problem of the writer who has copy paper, a late-model portable, an old farm in Connecticut, a nice wife, the right agent, and no ideas. The fellow need not worry, since Analyst Bergler finds that he can cure nearly 100% of such cases and says so in a brash passage recalling the palmy days of the old sure-cure Indian remedies. Every writer's urge, he holds, is sprung by some jolt at weaning time; the adult writer's flow of words is a psychological substitute for the flow of milk he wanted and did not get, plus a recompense for all the guilt he has subconsciously felt since his diaper days. Once the analyst has worked the anxious writer back to the point where he can endorse mother's product without fear, shame or remorse, it's simply a matter of putting a fresh sheet of paper into the machine and hitting the keys. At such a happy time, says Writer Bergler, there is little need for thought, either, since ideas don't come that way; they just originate in the hurricane cellar of the unconscious, and the writer traps them as they break for the open. According to Bergler, the writer's function is like that of a man erecting a prefabricated house; in writing he merely assembles slabs of his inner conflicts and his repressed desires in story form. Analyst Bergler has developed his ideas about writing and writers from the case histories of 36 writers who felt wretched enough to go to him for treatment. What Bergler may not clearly see is that in developing his interesting argument, he is performing a party trick rather like pulling a rug out from under his own feet. By the book's end, the reader has been taught to wonder what compulsion makes a man set out to explain most of the world's literature as just an infant's whimper for a bountiful teat."

It is doubtful whether the book taught the reviewer an alcoholic party trick. More likely, it could not prevent an allegedly intelligent person to summarize his opinions on a book on, let us say, scientific astronomy, with the words, "I don't wonder why the moon shines at night — it's dark;

but why the sun shines during daytime is enigmatic to me — isn't there enough light during the day?"

Other brazen misreadings are slightly below the level of even not-too-intelligent reviewing: the confusion between secondary elaboration and emergence of an idea, the misconception that "you too can write," which is not true (and not claimed in the book), as visible in the reviewer — he could be restored to writing only on condition that he had any talent to start with. Even the "sure-cure Indian remedies" he scornfully refers to could not help the type of reviewer he represents — sterile hatred and falsification of misread facts in his final, and even analytically irrevocable, lot.

11. *The Supercilious Review*

The supercilious reviewer knows everything better, is unconvinced by anything, and says so expressis verbis:

"Another book in which the reasons for 'artistic and creative drives' in people are studied. This time a bona fide psychoanalyst takes over the microscope for study. Unfortunately, his conclusions are no more valid than others'. — Writers are no more neurotic, as Bergler claims them to be, than typists and welders. And the mysterious forces which propel the creative drive, whether in writing or music, cannot be explained except in direct relation to the person under study. — In this book 36 writers are studied as case histories. And the conclusions add little light to the mysterious forces of the creative drive, despite the documented evidence produced by the author."

MIRROR, Los Angeles, 3/25/50

Here we are: "documented evidence" proves nothing, according to Hegel's dictum: If the facts are against me, so much the worse for — the facts. Of course, one could argue whether the reviewer does not belong in the group of "incompetent reviewers:" the lack of argument (even the silliest kind) and the finality of judgment justify a separate subgroup. At this point, another reviewer did better: he adduced as evidence questionnaires filled out by applicants for his course in writing:

"The author (of *THE WRITER AND PSYCHOANALYSIS*) has faith in human dignity and decency and exhibits strong disgust for authors who only attack and misrepresent the life around them. To him a writer is always a diseased person and too often an undesirable citizen.⁴ Having been a writer and teacher of writers for many years and having studied hundreds of revealing questionnaires submitted by applicants for my course, I cannot go along with Dr. Bergler. Far from being tortured souls, many authors write from joy of life, from a great gusto and zest for their materials."

Stanley Vestal, OKLAHOMAN, Oklahoma City, Okla., 4/2/50

How much superciliousness and overreading is necessary to claim seriously that "revealing questionnaires" are more revealing than an analysis of 1-2 years duration!

12. *The Grudging-Condensing Review*

This type of review consists of half-suppressed anger, mitigated by caution and resulting in half-admissions:

"The book is not written for the layman. There is nothing included which the layman should be deprived of knowing, but Dr. Bergler has not bothered to simplify the many psychiatric terms to the point of common understanding. Among psychiatric circles, however, it is considered a great step forward. — Despite the fact that many best-selling authors will swear that they write to suit the public's tastes and design their books with dollars in mind, Bergler says the only reason writers write is to defend themselves unconsciously against their own inner shames. Any other reason, he says, is bunk. — Bergler admits he is going out on a limb. Whether or not the examples he presents of actual writers is enough to cement the limb to the tree is a matter for each individual reader to decide for himself."

Dave Owens, NEWS, Greensboro, N. C., 4/30/50

This nice shifting of responsibility is coupled with a few nice misreadings: obviously to help simplify the terminology, the reviewer substitutes "shame" for conflicts with the unconscious conscience. The grudging admission that "among psychiatric circles the book is considered a great step forward," is touching.

4. Author's remark: Nothing of the kind is stated in the book.

13. *The "Mood" - Review*

Some reviewers believe that their business is not to inform their readers of the *contents* of a book, but of the *mood* of the reviewer while reading it. After reviewing, in his column, a certain lady's book on premonitions and "supernormal intuitions," a reviewer declares:

" . . . I personally found it an absorbing tale. Much more absorbing indeed than the didactic **THE WRITER AND PSYCHOANALYSIS** by the celebrated psychologist Edmund Bergler, which only made me annoyed. . . In this argument Dr. Bergler uses a great many long words but I don't think he proves anything except that artistic creation is the result of subconscious forces, which we knew already. . . Isn't the fact of a beautiful poem, like the fact of a beautiful tree, sufficient in itself without this ghoulsh probing into the unconscious, this mauling-about of the libido?"

Basil Woon in *NEWS*, San Francisco, Cal., 4/27/50

Spring comes early, and "supernormal intuitions" easily, in California; the reviewer must have read by looking at the beautiful tree instead of the ultimate product of a tree, the paper on which the book was printed. Being "annoyed," he just read — unprecisely; the result is that he understood, not the book, but his own "mood."

14. *The Flippant Review*

It is true that a joke can sometimes rescue the situation, but why be flippant when an explanation of mental misery, as writer's block entails, and the cure for the latter, is discussed? Obviously the tense situation, to be rescued by flippancy, must be inside the reviewer?

"Bergler has discovered a new theory in regard to the writer's subject matter. The writer does not develop his yarn in terms of repressed wishes, Bergler says, but in terms of the secondary defense mechanisms that hide such wishes. When the defense mechanisms fail to operate efficiently, his Superego rejects them and he has 'writer's block.' Bergler's book was written after psychoanalytical work with 36 writers, many of them suffering from 'writer's block,' which Bergler successfully removed. If we do not condemn Bergler's thesis then we must condemn him as a psycho-

analyst. His failure is implied in the fact that he cured the writers — that is, brought them back to writing. Yet as a psychoanalyst his duty should have been to bring them back to normality — that is, bring them beyond the pre-Oedipal relationship. Of course, having become normal we can assume none of them would have ever laid pen to paper again, since 'normal people don't write.' Obviously, since Bergler's writers went back and in many cases became better writers, Bergler must have proceeded to foul them up worse mentally — so that their secondary defense mechanisms were re-established. Sound, according to Bergler's theories, but very shoddy psychoanalysis.

CALIFORNIAN, Bakersfield, Cal. 2/23/50

The little fly in the ointment of this flippant deduction is the confusion between *productive sublimation* and *unproductive, neurotic, inhibition*. The book's long chapter on sublimation, explaining the difference, was lost on the reviewer.

Another argument of this sort came out repeatedly in reviews: the idea that explaining an unconscious mechanism means "be mad at writers." The naivete of the objection was foreseeable, hence this passage in the book:

"As to my alleged animosity towards writers, this charge reduces itself to absurdity. Psychoanalytic psychiatry is, among other things, an explaining science; therefore it is unavoidable that the naive should come to the erroneous conclusion that any explanation of the unconscious mechanism of writers is 'devaluation' and 'debunking.' These naive people would gladly invoke literary sedition laws, if there were any, and advocate my being punished for *crimen laesae majestatis*. For myself, I see no reason to take off my shoes when visiting the literary mecca." (Foreword xiii)

But who cares, as a reviewer, what that most unimportant person — the author — has to say? In a review entitled "Psychoanalyst Bites Writer, Is Bitten," one reads:

"Then — you may ask — if the doctor writes himself so much why is he so critical of his scribbling brethren? Here's the clue (5) to his unrest: 'To express it paradoxically, the writer must, without knowing it, accomplish what the psychoanalytic psychiatrist achieves consciously: the correct interpretation of human reactions.' So

5. It is interesting that the clinical purpose of the book — technique of removal of "writer's block" was rarely mentioned in reviews!

that's it! No wonder he's sore. Studied in Europe . . . spends five years and \$15,000 getting his post-graduate training in psychiatry — and what happens? Some goof who flunked out of the sixth grade finds a typewriter in the attic — and gets the same results. It would discourage anybody."

NEWS, Dayton, Ohio, 4/9/50

Unfortunately for the reviewer, the joke is a punch into nowhere. If one confuses conscious and unconscious, the penalty is dire — the joke evaporates. Once more, the reviewer misunderstood and misread not less than 265 out of the 265 pages of the book, which constantly stresses this difference. There is no denying it; reading with correct understanding is difficult; many talk about it, few master it.

15. *The "Fishing-for-Contradictions" Review*

This technique of misunderstanding is based on creation of an *artificial* contradiction, which in its turn is based on the reviewer's inability to read.

"The writer writes (according to Bergler) solely in an attempt to solve the inner conflict. Hence he strives not to express unconscious wishes but to express secondary unconscious defenses against these wishes. The writer is a salesman of 'sugar-coated alibis.' Yet Bergler tells us that you cannot be a writer unless you have inner love for people, or at least 'in the moment of artistic creation.' But if the artist be the sort of person Bergler describes, love or any conviction of human dignity would be forever foreign to his experience and understanding. Thus Bergler has succeeded in making artistic creation more mysterious than ever before."

Patrick Mullahy, NEW REPUBLIC, 6/19/50

The case is aggravated by the person of the reviewer — a psychologist — who should know better: "*the moment of artistic creation*" is not identical with the *everyday* of the writer. Hence the argument simply evaporates. The seeming scotoma manifesting itself in not reading with understanding (which may be based on the reviewer's animosity towards Freudian analysis) can also be substantiated by the alleged quotation, "salesman of 'sugar-coated alibis,' " which

is made to appear as though it were the *authors*. In actuality, as can be checked on p. 244 in the book, this is a statement of *a patient*, against which *the author protests* in a reproduced discussion:

Patient: "There's your phrase — that writers are just salesman of inner defenses."

Author: "Just amoment. The word 'salesman' was used by you for the express purpose of reducing me to absurdity. The word itself is part of the commercial world, and, in my opinion, commercialization has no connection with the writer's intentions. It is a secondary, nearly accidental, by-product. The real writer does not write primarily to make money. He would write out of an inner necessity, were his products unsaleable — as they frequently are, by the way."

No further comments necessary.

16. *The "No-Repatee" - Review*

Since a reviewer habitually considers himself the final arbiter, the newly introduced fact of an explanation of the unconscious motives of critics, as attempted in *THE WRITER*, should have given reviewers a slight jolt of insecurity. Of course it didn't. In Olympic pseudo-candor, covering up real fury, this part of the book was mostly not even mentioned, although it contributed extensively to the dislike for the book. Those few critics who were fair enough not to over-read it found themselves in the position of either ironically or indignantly carrying a placard reading, "Unfair to Critics. Please Do Not Patronize This Book." They didn't go so far as to picket the bookstores; they merely wrote. One anonymous reviewer ("E.S.T.") in *BOOKS IN REVIEW*, Toronto, Canada, April, 1950, has this to say in a review entitled, "No Comeback For The Reviewer":

"Dr. Bergler could be correct in his conclusions; he could be painfully wrong. But even critics were anticipated, for in the foreword he swings out with this: The contemporary critic is usually an inhibited writer filled unconsciously with undigested anger against the less inhibited of his confreres in the writing profession. — Any-

thing this reviewer might dare say after that haymaker would sound like sour grapes."

"Dr. Bergler's new book is going to cause a lot of ego-deflating. . ." (After quoting passages on writer and critics, the reviewer ends:) "Damaged egos may write to the book editor for consolation."

MIRROR, Los Angeles, Cal., 2/25/50

" — — — Of course, we can't talk, because the good doctor goes on to describe a literary critic as 'an inhibited writer filled unconsciously with undigested anger against the less inhibited of his confreres in the writing profession.' Nonsense! Our digestion can take almost anything without anger, except, perhaps, the writings of Taylor Caldwell, Erskine Caldwell, and the last book of Kathleen Winsor."

GAZETTE, Berkeley, Cal., 3/6/50

17. *The Intelligent Review*

The intelligent review — by no means identical with the favorable review, though many writers, naturally enough, identify them — simply presupposes correct reproduction of facts plus correct exaluation of the author's intentions. Small wonder that it is rather a rarity.⁵ This combination — reproduction of facts and intentions — requires, of course, absence of the *emotional reading-block* encountered so frequently among neurotic reviewers.

To cite, for a change, a few intelligent reviews:

"This is not an easy book to read or to understand, but it is an honest one and deserves a hearing. Dr. Bergler believes that the writer's creative ability does not stem directly from his subconscious wishes, but from a defense against those wishes, even from a defense against the defense. He explains and elaborates on this, using examples from literature and literary biography to illustrate his point. Never sensational, it comes very close to the experiences of many of us. . ."

Shirley Barker, Amer. Hist. Div., N. Y. Public Library,

LIBRARY JOURNAL, N.Y. Feb., 1950

Especially interesting are those reviewers who knew what the book was up against — as far as the emotional resistance

of critics and writer-readers is concerned. An example is from a professional paper for writers:

"'Rave Dep't.: Go-getter copy of THE WRITER AND PSYCHO-ANALYSIS . . . If you're sensitive about your pretensions (?) to being a writer, then you'll fume at 'The Writer and Psychoanalysis.' But if you can be objective for a change, and make believe the author is discussing anyone else but you, you'll have a good time comparing his observations with things you've noted about other writers. It's the kind of book whose discussion could 'make' an evening with members of the writing world. We honestly think you ought to have it as a prod, if not as a help."

Jessyca Russell, WRITERS NEWSLETTER, New York, 3/1/50

As another example, mentioning of the review in THE NEW YORK TIMES (Book Review Section, 2/26/50) is justified, because it shows how difficult it is to achieve objectivity when emotional problems are involved, even if the distinguished reviewer — Dr. Frank G. Slaughter, novelist and author of books on psychosomatic medicine — tries very hard.

" — — — Dr. Bergler, who has already turned the light of psycho-analysis upon many emotional problems of modern life . . . well sustains his thesis that 'the writer does not produce his works — as naive people assume — because he has something important to convey to his eager listeners, but solely to solve an inner conflict.' . . . This is a provocative book. Anyone who writes fiction can see just enough evident truth in the ingeniously presented theories to suggest that they may contain at least a substantial part of the answer to the fascinating question, whence comes the creative flow?"

Still, after having paid his dues to objectivity, the reviewer continues:

" . . . irritated by the glib way in which so many modern psychoanalysts make everything confirm their particular beliefs. It is certainly no support for a writer's self-esteem to read that all great works of literature come from the inability of a baby to get along with his mother. Adding insult to injury, Dr. Bergler tells us that 'imagination is the purified successor to infantile Peeping.' "

In short, part I and part II of the quoted review could have been written by two different people. They were both writ-

ten by the same eminent physician and novelist: the first *without*, the second *with* emotional involvement.

Just how to present a controversial issue in a review is, of course, a problem of taste and culture. We have previously seen enough examples of how it should *not* be done; here, as an example of how it *should* be done, is a review in the JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, Chicago, Aug. 12, 1950:

"The author of this book is a prolific writer. He is also a prominent psychotherapist and had the opportunity of examining under the psychoanalytic microscope 36 writers. . . . This combination of training and experience should and does make the author's theories, deductions and conclusions interesting to read, even though the subject matter may prove to be somewhat controversial. . . . The present volume will be of interest to both psychotherapists and writers. It is well written. . . ."

* * * *

What literary criticism urgently needs is more psychiatric knowledge and less neuroticism for the members of its craft. The grotesque fact that the neurotic ignoramus plays judge in a field which affects him emotionally is one of the caricaturistic expressions of our age. The words, "*our age*," are of importance: in the age of psychiatry, psychiatric amateurs — disguised as critics — full of hatred for psychiatry are out of place. Would anyone suggest that the psychiatry sections at induction centers for draftees be staffed with — literary critics? The idea is absurd; no less absurd is the reality, that psychiatrically ignorant reviewers judge the unconscious content of a work of art. What absurdities — culminating in *emotional reading block* of reviewers — arise when a psychiatric book is judged by literary critics is shown conclusively in the 16 types of reviews previously enumerated.

Not only are literary reviewers in the daily press and literary magazines psychiatric ignorants with an air of omniscience, but they cannot even agree on their conscious, purely literary and stylistic yardsticks. A significant example is to be found in De Voto's recent book, *THE WORLD*

OF FICTION. The same De Voto who so happily fell into the trap of "*emotional reading block*" — (see p. 200) — *the occupational hazard of reviewers*, comparable to "write'r block" in creative writers — has this to say about his colleagues:

Discussing one of the most beautiful passages of Thomas Wolfe's *OF TIME AND THE RIVER*, frequently reproduced in anthologies, De Voto protests:

"Quite apart from the point my text discusses, I cannot forbear remarking that this is fearfully bad writing. That the first of the passages I quote has been reprinted by various anthologies supposed to exemplify the best writing of our time, and that it is referred to seriously and even analyzed for beauty and subtlety of style in critical treatments of Wolfe, only make the standards of American criticism seem more amazing. . . I have remarked that many critics of fiction work under the handicap of not being able to think of novels from within, but surely the great obligation of a critic is to understand what prose is. The prose of these passages is inept, crude, trite, sprawling. It is sophomoric as the emotions it more or less eructates; in fact only a sophomore singularly gifted with vagueness could write so badly. Just why should we waste time on a critic's imperatives about the social and esthetic obligations of fiction when he admires such a stuff as this?"

Although De Voto said all this with malice aforethought about poor Wolfe, and for the wrong reasons, we can but agree for once with De Voto: "Why should we waste time on a (he should have said: any typical) critic's imperatives" — especially one who is psychiatrically ignorant, and still acts the psychiatric expert?

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Jazz — A Study in Cultural Conflict

by

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PERHAPS the most strikingly indigenous product of American popular culture is hot jazz music. It has been and is regarded all over the world as a peculiarly American art form, and as such has been warmly welcomed by both masses and intellectuals in such countries as France and as warmly denounced in the totalitarian nationalisms of Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia.

Paradoxically, however, in the very country of its origin hot jazz¹ has had a very limited acceptance. Its appreciation is restricted to relatively small groups, and the mass of the dominant cultural group has either rejected it or modified it almost beyond recognition into "swing" and "popular dance music".

This is an extraordinary phenomenon, virtually unparalleled in history. It is rare indeed for a cultural product to achieve greater recognition in alien cultures than in that which engendered it. It would seem to be a problem worthy of investigation, yet little or nothing has been written on the question. This article will seek to fill the gap by considering some of the psychological factors involved.

Hot jazz was born (it can only be said to have been born, rather than "created") in and around New Orleans in the years before the turn of the 20th century. It arose out of a unique combination of cultural forces to be found nowhere else in the world. New Orleans was, in those days, an island of Latin, Romance culture in the predominantly Anglo-Saxon United States. The French-Creole influence, though on the wane, still governed the social-forms of New Orleans life, and that city remains to this day the most cosmopolitan and most tolerant in the South.

Jazz was fathered by the Negroes who inhabited that

island — the recently liberated, barely acculturated Negroes, many but one or two generations removed from Africa, among whom there still flourished the old African rituals and traditions. In his book "The French Quarter"² Herbert Asbury vividly describes and amply documents African voodoo rituals which were held regularly in New Orleans during this era, and have continued sporadically until the present day. Highly popular and heavily attended, these rituals carried out in detail the practices of African religious rites, with traditional African drumming as a frequent musical accompaniment.

The antecedents of jazz were the work-songs, the spirituals, the blues — songs of protest, of prayer, of sorrow, expressing the torments and preoccupations of an enslaved people. *Mais autres temps, autres chansons*. In post-emanicipation New Orleans, one of the most wide-open cities in the world, other needs generated other musical forms. Now a music was needed for the brothels, the dance-halls, the barrel-houses, the saloons. Jazz was a play-music, though elements of its predecessors remained in it and frequently spoke through it. In its mood and spirit it was perfectly attuned to the functions that evoked it and that it accompanied.

Musically³ jazz derived almost directly from African roots. Both tonally and rhythmically it bore little relationship to European music. The uniform, unvarying rhythmic accents of Western music were ignored in favor of a freer rhythmic structure, with "hanging behind" and "jumping ahead" of the beat on the part of the melodic instruments, and subtle toying with and modification of the basic rhythmic pattern. Similarly the diatonic scale of European music was frequently rejected, with the utilization of the more primitive tonality in which many of the tones appear flat ("blue notes") to Western ears but are quite consonant with the system of tonality employed in African music. These formal elements served as a framework for the new musical form, which is probably best described as improvised contra-

puntal variations on a theme, with interspersed solo variations.

In contrast to the orchestra of European music (and of "Swing"), where the individual musician is lost in the coordinated ensemble, in the jazz band the artist is always a unit performing an independent function which is nonetheless essential for the group purpose. The situation is partially comparable to that of the string quartet, except that the jazz artist is always expressing his own musical ideas and his own emotions rather than those of another, and that in his solos the jazz musician achieves a complete freedom unknown in European music. Only the bare theme is given; all else is improvised creation, in which the individual member of the band participates in the group activity without losing his identity. Thus jazz is a kind of musical embodiment of democracy.

In its northward progress up the Mississippi and into the great centers of population, jazz encountered the general American culture. Reared on European musical principles, this culture was pervaded by the Puritan morality that was and is the dominant tradition in the United States. Characterized by a rigid cultural superego with high value placed on restraint and propriety, it dictated the stern suppression of instinctual (id) drives, most particularly those of sexuality. This is not to say that such was true of all elements in the American cultural complex, but certainly in the numerically and socially dominant element, the old-stock Anglo-Saxons, the Puritan tradition held almost complete sway. And jazz made its appearance on the Northern scene at about the time of the greatest experiment in mass repression man has ever known — Prohibition, the triumph of perverted Puritanism.

The consequence of this encounter was ineluctable and predictable. The new, strange sounds of jazz, completely alien to the ears of acculturated Americans, evoked uncertainty, bewilderment, confusion, — ultimately, anxiety. This

phenomenon has been seen with every advance in art. Beethoven's new harmonies, Schönberg's atonality, Stravinsky's dissonances, Picasso's distortions. Joyce's linguistic experimentation — all have had the same effect. The majority in any culture is fundamentally conservative, insofar as the basic forms of the culture are concerned. Any striking innovation represents a threat to established culture, and as such inevitably arouses anxiety. This is true, not only with the masses but also with many intellectuals. It was particularly true in the case of jazz, because of its associations. Produced by a "primitive" group in an area where a less repressive morality flourished, jazz was by its very nature associated with vital libidinal impulses — sex, drink, sensual dancing — precisely the id drives that the superego of the bourgeois culture sought to repress. In addition, psychoanalysis has shown us that in the unconscious of the white man the Negro frequently symbolizes the tabooed id impulses, in conformity with the symbolism: White equals good, black equals evil. Witness the preoccupation of the white Southerner with the fantasied threat posed by the Negro to "Southern womanhood" and the widespread myth of the superior sexual potency of Negroes.

Jazz thus carried with it the threat of the return of the repressed — a universal source of anxiety. Under these circumstances, produced by both the formal and connotative elements in jazz, the culture was forced to carry out the same kind of activity as is used by the individual in combatting anxiety — the employment of defense mechanisms. In this instance, the simplest of defenses — those of reinforced repression and denial were used. Many intellectuals rationalized their defenses by regarding jazz as an "inferior" form of music, a "popular diversion", unworthy of consideration by those whose interests lay in the realm of the "fine arts". In any case, the new form was simply rejected, cast out into a kind of cultural limbo, its very existence ignored or decried. Sermons were preached against it — all in the hope of driving it out of public consciousness, so that it could no

longer pose its threat of reawakening repressed instinctual drives.

Unfortunately for this hope, however, circumstances conspired against the success of the defense. In the first place, jazz was too vigorous a force to submit passively to such rejection. It carried behind it the vitality of a rising and increasingly productive element in American society. Secondly, the repressions of Prohibition were being widely resisted. As would have been expected from its origins and functions, jazz and variants of it proved to be natural accompaniments to this resistance. So natural an accompaniment did they prove, indeed, that the whole era has come to be known (somewhat inaccurately, to be sure) as "the jazz age".

As a consequence, a stronger and more mature defense was called into play — a kind of sublimation by compromise-formation. Jazz was made socially acceptable by modifying it to resemble more closely the traditional musical forms, until, after passing through such phases as "Chicago style" and Paul Whiteman's "Symphonic Jazz" it emerged during the '30's as "swing". In "swing" the improvisational quality of jazz was largely abandoned, to be replaced by highly arranged, technically complex scores based on European models. The variant African beats and tonality were eschewed, and the spontaneous emotional expression of jazz was exchanged for virtuosity. Retaining enough of the original quality of jazz to provide some harmless titillation, yet sufficiently emasculated to present no serious menace, "swing" represented the ideal compromise. The adequate defense was at last achieved, and "swing" went on to sweep the nation and become integrated into the mass culture.

But we know that jazz was never completely cast out. There has always been, and there remains today, a relatively small but eager audience that seeks it out wherever it is to be found. What characterizes this audience? Wherein does it differ from the generality of American culture?

An examination of this audience, which is concentrated

in large cities, shows that it can be broken down into a few fairly well-defined segments:

1. Intellectuals
2. Negroes, but an increasingly small number of them.
3. Adolescents.

It will be immediately evident that each of these groups consists of individuals who, consciously or unconsciously, regard themselves as outside the accepted cultural framework and as unbound by many of its conventions.

American intellectuals are trapped in an almost hopeless conflict between their devotion to human individuality, intellectual freedom, and artistic spontaneity, and the commercialism, philistinism, standardization, and all-too-prevalent suppression of intellectual freedom that characterize much of American culture. Because of the universal human need for group identification and solidarity, this conflict remains unconscious to many of them. They achieve, at the cost of independent judgment and spontaneous response, a large measure of security in social integration, accepting most of the essential elements of culture, and overlooking others. Their need to conform leads them to reject the new and unusual, despite their "artistic" interests. But for many others, this is impossible. Aware of the paradoxical nature of their position, they feel alienated and isolated. Thus their headlong flights to Europe, where they seek, for a moment or permanently, a culture which appears to have their own values. Others flee into bohemianism, to create their own small *avante-garde* world in the midst of Philistia.

The problem of the Negro in America is too well known to require elaboration here. As has been noted above, he, along with his music, has been cast out by white society in order to obviate the threat he poses to the white man by reminding him of his own repressed instinctual drives. Obviously there are many other reasons for the discrimination of whites against Negroes, but it is no accident that the recent

social gains of the Negro and his slow but evident progress toward equality have been occurring simultaneously with an equally slow but evident progress toward a more rational sexual morality in this country. It is interesting to note that along with this progressive integration of the Negro into the culture (and, of course, the intense drive of the Negro for such integration) has gone an extensive change in the musical taste of the Negro, in the direction of Europeanized, virtuoso music which has reached its peak in "bop", with its sophisticated rhythms and chordal progressions.

As to the adolescent, he is in a state of rebellion, precipitated by the upsurge of sexual drive with the onset of puberty, against the restrictions of his childhood. He is seeking to throw off the parent-imposed superego taboos that marked his immaturity, from which he is gropingly emerging into an adulthood he has yet to attain. Dissatisfied with and frustrated by the conventional values he has been taught, he has not yet formulated his own, and is thus in the state of confusion and protest that we have come to know as "the awkward age".

To all of these the peculiar qualities of jazz have an irresistible appeal. The unspoken protest, the kinesthetic release, the stimulation of repressed erotic drives — all these strike a responsive chord in the spirits of those members of the society who regard themselves as at once its outcasts and its prisoners. We can see here, too, an explanation of the "Dixieland revivals" that have accompanied the late war and the present period of confusion and turmoil. Under such conditions there is characteristically widespread physical and emotional uprooting, accompanied by an upheaval in morality and a general lowering of repressive barriers.

Jazz is, thus, a music for those who seek liberation and individuality. It has played the role of a forbidden impulse in the psychology of American culture, and it has required vigorous defense mechanisms to keep it from disrupting the equilibrium of conventional society. On the other hand, in

France, where a more rational morality prevails, and where there has always been less resistance to innovation, jazz was greeted and is still entertained with enthusiasm. And in this country, so long as there are people who are young, dissatisfied with the repressive forms of the culture, and eager for new experience, hot jazz music will remain an active force on the edges of American cultural life.

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FOOTNOTES

1. In the following discussion the term "jazz" will be considered synonymous with so-called "New Orleans Style" jazz.
2. Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1936.
3. For the musicological material in this paragraph the author is indebted to Mr. Marshall Stearns